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AUTHOR Hotte, Eleanor Boettke
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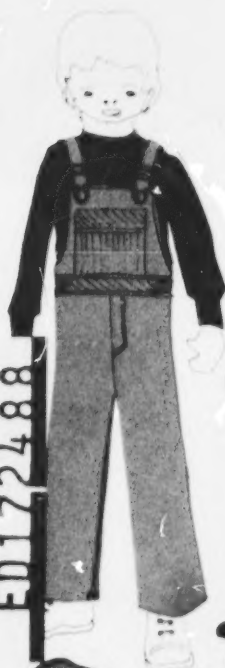
ABSTRACT

Intended for parents and teachers of the physically handicapped, the booklet reviews the present clothing picture and provides suggestions for solving clothing and dressing problems. In an initial section addressed to parents the chapters cover the need for children to function independently, selection of the person and timing for training in self-dressing, and guidelines for meeting the clothing and dressing needs of the child. The next group of chapters includes sections with the following headings: why are clothes important to a child; what kind of clothing should you and your child select; what size do you buy; what fabrics do you buy; will it wear well; and what are the child's needs (regarding underwear, footwear, sleepwear, tops and bottoms, dresses, outerwear, swimwear, and helping children help themselves). A final section offers tips for teaching dressing skills and suggestions for easier dressing. A list of readings and resources on aids to independent living for the handicapped is also included. Illustrations are provided throughout the booklet. (SBH)

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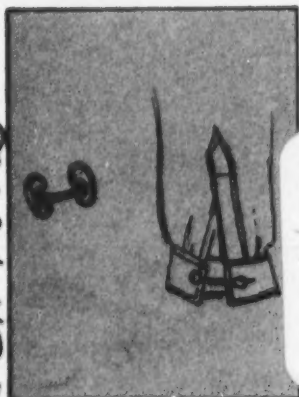
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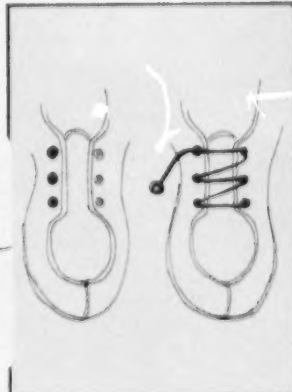
FOR CHILDREN WHO HAVE
PHYSICAL DISABILITIES



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Self-Help Clothing



**FOR CHILDREN
WHO HAVE
PHYSICAL
DISABILITIES**

Revised Edition

by

ELEANOR BOETTKE HOTTE

Professor Emeritus

School of Home Economics and Family Studies

University of Connecticut

Storrs, Connecticut

Published by

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FOREWORD

This revision was done in response to requests to update the material appearing in the booklet *Self-Help Clothing for Handicapped Children*, which was developed collaboratively by the author, Neva Weigoner, and Clari Bare and published by the National Easter Seal Society in 1962. The first edition was based largely on results of a research and demonstration project conducted at the School of Home Economics, University of Connecticut, and on a study carried out cooperatively by the School with the Easter Seal Society of Connecticut and the Hartford Easter Seal Rehabilitation Center under the leadership of the National Easter Seal organization through a grant from Zeta Tau Alpha Fraternity.

The revision required a review of the present clothing picture — of what is available, what is being worn, and the changing attitudes that society has about clothing. Consideration had to be given to the greater ability that individuals with disabilities have today to participate in events and happenings around them. The barriers are beginning to break down and, as they do, independence has a greater reward.

The author is in debt to her students who worked with children who have physical disabilities and shared the results they had in solving clothing and dressing problems. Special appreciation is given to two graduate students — Mickey Auerbach Kramer, for her enthusiastic assistance in keeping this information catalogued and available for others to use, and Nancy Levitan-Rheingold, for her contributions in suggesting clothing adaptations, reviewing the manuscript, and permitting quotation from the manual on dressing skills that is included in her research, "The Design and Development of a Special Educational Instrument for Teaching the Handicapped the Fundamental Skills in Undressing and Dressing," which she completed at the University of Connecticut in 1977.

Eleanor Boettke Hotte

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PREFACE FOR PARENTS

The Dilemma of Parents

"Why our child?" is often the first question parents ask when they learn that their child has a physical handicap. The next question may be, "What do we do now?" Few parents are prepared to face the unknown problems that are involved in rearing a child with a physical disability. They may not understand what a physical disability means let alone know what their role should be in caring for the child. In the confusion of mixed feelings of worry, guilt, pity, inadequacy, love, and concern, it is so easy to tell oneself, "I must take care of my child and protect him or her from the hazards of everyday living." Smothering with love and pity will not protect a child from these hazards; it will only increase the hazards.

Consider The Child

Your child is *first of all a child*, with the same basic emotional needs as every other child — the needs for love, belonging, independence, achievement, recognition, and self-esteem. Recognize that there may be certain limitations, but don't prevent the child from developing to the fullest potential. Help your child achieve this goal by providing an environment that encourages physical and mental development.

Your efforts, as well as the efforts of other family members and those of the doctor and all concerned with the child's welfare, should be directed toward this goal.

Your child's physical disability should be viewed in terms of long-range planning. Remember, your child is going to grow and mature and must be equipped to deal with life not only as it is now, but also as it will be.

Parents who direct their efforts toward helping their child to cope with his or her disability will do much to enable the child to accept the limitation by the time adulthood is reached. The growth years are a time when children learn who they are and discover their special abilities as well as the extent of their capacities. Parents can help by providing a home atmosphere that encourages experimentation and the development of self-confidence and independence.

Doing for Oneself

The desire for doing things independently will show up early and should be recognized. Children reach out for the spoon that is used to feed them or pull at their socks. The routine of everyday living is where the first efforts are usually made. Encourage these early attempts even though they may take more time.

Few parents realize how seriously they can handicap the physical, mental, and emotional growth of their children by limiting their independence in the performance of daily functions. It is not cruel to expect children who are disabled to perform in ways equal to their abilities. Discuss plans with the doctor, therapist, teacher, and other family members and set realistic goals. Give your child self-confidence so he or she can become as independent as possible within individual limitations.

Do not let the remarks and opinions of well-meaning relatives and neighbors about what is best outweigh your own considered judgment. Expect cooperation from your child, but be careful not to destroy initiative. Let your child have the fun of making discoveries whenever possible. Nor should you be afraid to expose your child to the healthy frustrations from which learning can stem. Standards should not be set too

high since this may give the child a sense of failure and inadequacy. Realistic goals plus genuine effort will help reap the satisfactions of success.

The whole experience of getting dressed and undressed seems very automatic once a child learns how to do it. But it is a very involved process that is influenced by the kinds of clothing being worn. Most children learn to dress quite competently by the time they are 5 or 6 years old. However, when a child lacks mobility, muscle strength, or coordination, the learning time may be extended over a much longer period. Understanding this fact and knowing the importance of independence should help parents develop the necessary patience to allow whatever time is needed for teaching this skill.

Being able to care for oneself adds immeasurably to one's personal dignity and self-esteem. Children who cannot perform some part of the job — such as tying shoes — should be responsible for asking someone else to do it for them. Making decisions about clothes will help children to make decisions in other areas of living.

Who Should Train The Child?

Sooner or later, parents must assume the responsibility of training their child in self-dressing. If the child has had rehabilitation training, some of these skills may already have been started. Be sure that you thoroughly understand the aims and techniques of the occupational therapist so you can continue this training at home. If any other person takes over the routine, even temporarily, be sure that this person also understands the procedure. Variations in routine distract from learning.

Since extra time is needed for a child to learn dressing activities, you may need to have a family conference to plan how family members can assume responsibility for other household routines to provide the time needed for training.

Plan these family chores together as a family unit, making sure your child who is disabled is included in planning and sharing of responsibilities. Participation in decisions that involve the whole family helps the child to feel that he or she is making a contribution.

When Should Training Be Started?

Start when the child seems ready. This will not be the same for all children even in the same family. No two children are alike nor do they develop at the same rate nor do they have the same abilities. Begin giving help when the child starts to show interest in undressing by attempting to take off shoes or socks. Ordinarily, this will be when the child is able to sit alone, reach, grasp, and release in some way.

The characteristic behavior of children provides a guide as to the order in which a child usually learns self-dressing:

- Begins to cooperate in the dressing process by holding still, extending arm or leg, shows interest in hats, shoes, and pants. More interested in taking off than putting on.

- Takes off mittens, socks; unzips zippers. If clothing is simple, may be able to undress completely.
- Starts interest in dressing. Tries hard to put on garments though often backwards, with both feet in the same pant leg, etc.
- Starts to learn unbuttoning; undresses easily. Cannot tell right from left or front from back consistently. Fastenings still bothersome.
- Dresses with little help. Can lace but not tie shoes. Enjoys dressing up in adult clothes.
- Becomes more skillful in all processes. Learns to tie shoelaces, fasten buttons and snaps.

Although this pattern may not be followed exactly by all children, it does give an idea of what to expect. Keep in mind that your child's progress will depend on his or her interest and success in each phase of dressing.

How Can The Child's Clothing and Dressing Needs Be Met?

This is a persistent question in the minds of parents. Will special clothes or special training in teaching dressing skills be required? The remainder of this booklet contains many helpful suggestions on selection and adaptation of garments and different ways of training the child who does need help.

Children can be helped to dress themselves if they are given:

Clothes that are easy to manipulate.

Guidance in learning to undress and dress.

Time to try over and over again the task of putting on one item of clothing before trying to learn another.

Encouragement to try to learn.

Praise when successful.

Understanding and Patience on the part of parents to let the child try again and again without taking over.

This last suggestion is easy to state but much more difficult to do. It takes practice for the child to learn to do independently, and it takes understanding and patience from parents to provide the opportunity.

Remember that ability to do for oneself:

- Gives the child a sense of accomplishment and self-esteem.
- Frees the child for efforts toward independence in other areas.
- Makes it easier for the child to adjust to public school routines and increases confidence.

- Opens up possibilities for the child to attend camps and other recreational programs.
- Increases the child's happiness at a hospital or residential school where institutional staff cannot give the type of assistance possibly given at home.
- Opens up possibilities for the child's future years in leading a happy, successful, and independent life.
- Frees parents to devote time to other members of the family.

Measure your child's success in relation to his or her sense of accomplishment and desire to try more things. Reward your child with praise when a task is achieved, no matter how small it may be.

Backsliding will be inevitable, since no learning progresses at an even rate. But each small achievement will add to what has been learned before.

An eminent doctor of physical medicine observed that in all his years of practice, he found little relationship between the physical limitations of a disability and the patient's ability to accomplish seemingly impossible tasks. Present your child with the challenge, the guidance, and the encouragement, and you may be surprised at what the child can do.

THE CHILD'S CLOTHING

Why Are Clothes Important to a Child?

Clothing helps children identify who they are and influences how they feel and think about themselves. Whenever children are comfortable in their clothing, they know that their appearance is good. They feel the approval of those with whom they interact. Acceptance builds confidence and helps individuals relax in social settings. It creates something of a chain reaction. A happy and contented child communicates these feelings to others . . . which makes a good impression and leads to acceptance into a group . . . which in turn increases the child's self-esteem.

Children also think about clothing as a part of their bodies because from the time they can remember they have been wearing clothes. If there are certain negative feelings about their bodies, similar feelings may be attached to the clothing they wear. To help a child over such negativism, it may be possible to use clothing for "disguise" purposes. Clothes can make a person look wider, longer, narrower; clothes can direct the eye, create roles, or project an image of strength, aggression, weakness, or fragility. Will you not use these camouflage effects to cover up something that may bother your child? This may be particularly important during the adolescent years when a child is searching for identity. These are the years when it is difficult to be different, when children compare themselves with others in their age group.

You can contribute to the development of a good self-image by allowing your child to have some choice in the selection of clothing. Do not ignore the child's likes or dislikes; there may be important reasons for these attitudes. Instead, give the child an opportunity to express ideas and assist in the selection whenever possible. Parents may have to control these choices, but giving a chance to choose helps increase self-confidence and sense of responsibility in self-care.

The age at which your child expresses an interest in clothing is not too significant, but how you respond to this interest is highly significant.

Even though your ideas may be in conflict with your child's, do give guidance and support. Help to create an understanding of what garment features contribute to body comfort, what garments are becoming to body structure and will give satisfaction when worn.

To give guidance, parents will need to understand what clothing will best serve the needs of the child who sits in a wheelchair, walks with crutches, wears braces or a prosthesis, or depends on some other assistive device to aid in the activities of daily living. This is not an easy task because each child's needs are individual and the availability of certain styles of clothing is subject to fashion changes. What is in the stores today may not be there next year. Recognize that fashions change, even for children. Shop for features that meet needs rather than specific styles. For example, an A-line princess style dress may answer the needs of a girl who wears braces with a pelvic band, but if the princess silhouette is not in fashion, you will not find one in the stores or catalogs. Nor would your daughter want to wear one since no one else would be wearing that style. It would be more helpful to look for garments with full cuts rather than fitted lines, for expandable waistlines or no waistline seams, and for center-front openings.

What Kind of Clothing Should You and Your Child Select?

Certain features will provide your child with functional clothing that will encourage achievement of independence in dressing. Let these generalizations guide you in making selections, but when you are buying specific items, review the many suggestions given for individual apparel items.

1. Select simple lines and cuts that are attractive and allow extra room for body movement.
2. Select clothes that are easy to take off and put on.
3. Select openings and fasteners that are within reach and grasp of the child.
4. Select fabrics that have good wearing qualities and do not wrinkle easily or show spots or stains readily.
5. Select clothes with fabric interest such as color combinations, prints, plaids, or checks, rather than fussy details.
6. Know your child's measurements and buy clothes that are sized to fit needs.

It is not enough to emphasize functional features; you must be sure that these features are found on garments that are attractive and similar to the garments that other children are wearing. Include a few items that will bring a touch of humor or excitement into the child's life.

What Size Do You Buy?

Sizing is important for comfort, fit, and safety in clothes. Too often you are told to buy a larger size, particularly if a child wears braces. Although a larger size gives more room and may make it easier for a child to get garments on over braces, the end result will be unsatisfactory. The appearance of an oversized garment is not very attractive nor is a too-big garment very comfortable. A loose, bulky garment can even be hazardous, for clothing that does not fit the body does not stay in place. Excess fabric can get caught on projections as a child moves through a room. Also, extra bulk can cause discomfort if a child has to sit all day in a wheelchair.

A child may need extra room for irregular body movements, but does not need excessive fullness that is not controlled. It is far more satisfactory to buy clothes that are sized to fit a body type. Instead of depending on large sizes, look for clothes that are cut with added room for movement or clothes that can be adapted to give added room. Buy your child's clothes according to height and weight or body type rather than by age.

Check sizing charts on display in stores or in mail order catalogs to assure the best choice of size. Also consider some of the special size ranges as possible solutions to the problems of different body proportions. For boys and girls who are heavier, examine the measurements given for chubby or husky sizes. Also consider petite and tall sizing for children who may be very small in stature or taller than is the norm for the age range.

What Fabrics Do You Buy?

Confronted with a wide range of apparel choices when selecting clothing for your child, you will find it prudent to look at fabric properties and performance characteristics. Ask yourself these questions: What will this fabric do to make my child more comfortable? Will this fabric be durable under special wearing conditions? Will this fabric be easy to care for at home?

There are no simple answers to these questions, but you can increase your knowledge about the textile products that are available to you and your family and develop an awareness of label information which will certainly help you to make wise decisions. First, recognize that Comfort, Durability, and Easy care, the "CDEs" of fabric, are influenced by the fiber content, the way the fabric is constructed, and the finishes that are applied to the fabric. *Search out the fibers that rank high in the CDEs.*

Look for labels that show:

Polyester or polyester/cotton, polyester/rayon, polyester/acrylic, polyester/cotton/nylon blends.

Polyesters are strong, resistant to stretching, shrinking, and wrinkling. They can be heat set for permanent creases or pleats. In addition, polyesters are easily washed and are quick drying. Some polyesters are identified by registered trade names such as Dacron, Encron, Fortrell, Kodel, and Trevira.

Acrylic or acrylic/cotton, acrylic/nylon blends.

Acrylics are soft, warm, and lightweight. They are resistant to wrinkling, sagging, and stretching. They are easily washed and quick drying. Some acrylics are identified by registered trade names as Acrilan, Creslan, Orlon, and Sayelle.

Nylon or nylon blends.

Nylon is one of the strongest textile fibers. In blends it contributes strength, abrasion resistance, and dimensional stability in washing. It also adds quick drying qualities. Its strength and elasticity are among reasons why nylon is used as a reinforcer in socks, sweaters, underwear, pants, and swimwear. Some nylons are identified by trade names such as Antron, Qiana, Enkalur, and Caprolan.

Search out weaves and knits that rank high in the CDEs.

Look for fabrics that are close compact weaves such as denims, chinos, corduroys, flannels, broadcloths, and poplins. These fabrics are stronger than loosely woven or novelty-type constructions.

Look for knitted fabrics that are firm and closely knitted. Knit fabrics, because of their loop construction, are porous or open, allowing air to circulate and, therefore, adding to body comfort. They also have good stretch and recovery properties, which allow for greater freedom of movement of the body. They are generally soft and lightweight fabrics, which make them more comfortable and less fatiguing to wear.

Single knits made with *interlock stitches* produce fabrics that are the same on both sides, soft to the touch, and good in moisture absorbency. This last characteristic is important where perspiration is a problem. These fabrics will not lose their shape in wearing or laundering. Rib knit stitches contribute a high stretch characteristic.

Look for rib knits on the outer edges of garments such as the bottoms of sweaters, sleeve edges, and necklines. *Double knits* are also a good choice because they do not lose their shape and resist running. Double knits are heavier-weight fabrics than single knits and are less stretchable, but knits made from yarns that pull or snag easily, such as in 100% polyester knits, should be avoided. *Tricot knits* are run resistant and nonfraying. Garments made from tricot knits are comfortable because of the softness, drapability, and stretch characteristics of the fabric.

Remember the strength of a knit fabric is enhanced when the yarns are strong and balanced — that is, of even thickness or weight — and when the number of stitches is high to give a compact structure.

Search out the finishes that are high in CDEs

Look for labels that tell you something about the finishes applied to the fabric. You are most concerned with functional finishes that will improve the service characteristics of the fabrics in your child's garments.

Look for *antistatic finishes* that will reduce the way a fabric clings to the body or other fabrics, particularly in cold, dry weather. The crackling noise that often accompanies the removal of a sweater or coat is annoying, and a person may feel slight tinglings when touching the metal of a wheelchair or railing for support. Some yarns have antistatic properties built in, such as Antron III, which is used in underwear and sleepwear.

Look for *antibacterial finishes* that prevent deterioration and discoloration of the fabric caused by bacteria, mildew, and mold organisms. These finishes eliminate odors due to perspiration build-up in garments. Trademarks such as Bioguard, Sani-Guard or Sanitized designate this type of finish.

Look for *shrinkage control*. Garments that shrink are doubly disappointing because they are uncomfortable for the wearer and they are an economic loss to the purchaser. Look for trade names such as *Sanforized*, a trademark that means the fabric has been preshrunk and that it will not shrink more than 1% by standard tests of the U.S. Government. *Sanforized-Plus* is a trademark that appears on wash-and-wear or minimum-care items that meet rigid test requirements for shrinkage, smoothness, and crease recovery after washing. It tells you that the garment will not "shrink out of fit." *Sanforized-Plus 2* is licensed for use on durable press garments. It tells you that the garment will not "shrink out of fit" regardless of how it is laundered.

On knit garments, look for *Sanfor-Knit*, which ensures you of lasting comfort and fit of the garment after home washing and machine drying. *Sanfor-Set* is a tumble-dry shrinkage standard. It tells you that you have a no-iron cotton denim that will not shrink and will have a soft hand and smooth appearance after laundering.

Look for *soil release finishes*. They increase absorbency of the fabric. This means that you will be able to remove stains from clothing when you launder them at home. An added feature is that soil-release finishes make the fabric absorb perspiration and, therefore, give greater comfort to the wearer. Look for trade names such as Dual-action Scotchguard, Fybrite, Visa, and X-it.

Although we have placed a high priority on comfort, durability, and easy care, it is also important to consider the safety and protection aspects of clothing. You can ensure increased safety from burns by selecting flame retardant fabrics whenever possible. Flammability regulations have received considerable attention in recent years, and the Consumer Product Safety Commission reviews mandatory flammability standards on a regular basis. The textile industry continues to work on the modification of fibers, the blending of fibers, and the structure of the fabric to produce flame-retardant fabrics. Try to stay informed on current developments.

Garments that meet federal flammability standards must inform the consumer if the fire retardancy is affected by the laundering procedures. Look for washing instructions on children's sleepwear, sizes 0-14. A typical label will state, "Machine wash—warm, tumble dry—low heat." To retain flame resistance, it is necessary to use detergent, soap or hard water should not be used.

Will It Wear Well?

In addition to the special characteristics of the fiber, fabric construction, and finishes, the durability or wearing quality of garments is dependent on the way the garment is made. Added wearing quality is of special importance if the child wears braces or uses crutches or a wheelchair or if the child crawls or has to tug and pull excessively to get in and out of clothing. Searching for garments made from strong fabrics and sewn together with strong construction features should provide your child with longer-wearing garments.

**SINGLE EDGE OF SEAM
ALLOWANCE MACHINE
STITCHED TO PREVENT
RAVELING**



**BOTH EDGES OF SEAM
ALLOWANCE STITCHED
TOGETHER TO PREVENT
RAVELING**



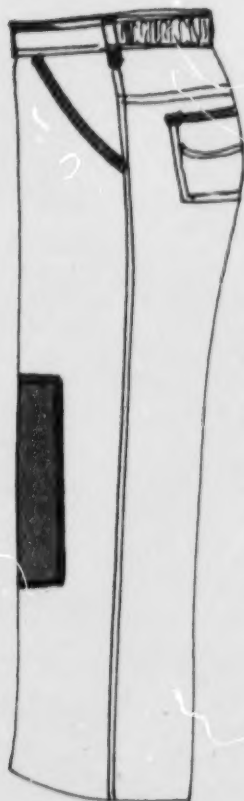
Look for seam construction that will not fray easily and slip out, such as: Garments that have raw edges of seams stitched with an overlock stitch. Either the seam allowances can be stitched together or the seam can be opened flat with the edges overcast by machine stitches.

Garments that have double-stitched seams (flat-fell or welt seams are terms to look for when ordering by mail) give added strength because the raw edges are enclosed in the seam and the seam is stitched more than once.

DOUBLE-STITCHED SEAMS ARE STRONG



**REINFORCED
POCKET OPENINGS
AND KNEES**



Look for *reinforced areas at points of strain or stretching*, such as: Neck and shoulder seams taped in knitwear garments to prevent stretching out of shape.

Pocket edges and other openings reinforced with bar tacks or double stitching or rivets to prevent ripping from usage.

Zippers reinforced at edges, particularly on garments with separating zippers, to prevent the zipper tape from pulling out of the garment opening.





DOUBLE FABRIC AT THE ELBOW AREA

Double fabrics in areas of great strain or added wear from friction, such as double-knee construction on pants or double seats on underwear or pajamas.

You may find it necessary to make additional reinforcements in other areas of garments because of unique wear given to the garment due to body movements or assistive devices that are used. An example would be children using their elbows as levers to lift their bodies, causing more friction on fabrics in this area of sleeves. Adding padding or a quilted or leather patch to the sleeve at the bend of the elbow will help to prevent wear. Another example would be children walking with a scissors gait, causing friction that wears out the knees and inside legs of pants. Stitching another layer of fabric to the inside legs before the wear occurs will lengthen the wearing time of the pants.

When you find a brand that wears well and has given satisfaction, make note of this and look for that brand name again. You will find it helpful to keep size information and brand names in a small notebook that you can carry around with you. This can be a great time-saver when shopping. If you buy through mail order houses, read descriptions carefully for information on wearing qualities.

How you take care of your child's clothing will also determine durability. Permanent care labels have been required to be affixed to all clothing items manufactured since July, 1972, and these labels describe in uniform terms the recommended care and maintenance for the garment. Read the labels and understand what they mean. For example, when the label reads, "Washable or Machine Washable," it means you can wash, bleach, dry, and press by any customary method, including commercial laundering.

Study the Consumer Care Guide to help you to understand the brief instructions on the permanent care labels on garments.

See pages 12 and 13.

CONSUMER CARE GUIDE FOR APPAREL

		WHEN LABEL READS:	IT MEANS:
MACHINE WASHABLE		Machine wash	Wash, bleach, dry and press by any customary method including commercial laundering and drycleaning
		Home launder only	Same as above but do not use commercial laundering
		No Chlorine Bleach	Do not use chlorine bleach. Oxygen bleach may be used
		No Bleach	Do not use any type of bleach
		Cold wash Cold rinse	Use cold water from tap or cold washing machine setting
		Warm wash Warm rinse	Use warm water or warm washing machine setting
		Hot wash	Use hot water or hot washing machine setting
		No spin	Remove wash load before final machine spin cycle
		Delicate cycle Gentle cycle	Use appropriate machine setting; otherwise wash by hand
		Durable press cycle Permanent press cycle	Use appropriate machine setting; otherwise use warm wash, cold rinse and short spin cycle
		Wash separately	Wash alone or with like colors

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This Guide is made available to help you understand and follow the brief care instructions found on permanent labels on garments. Be sure to read all care instructions completely!

	WHEN LABEL READS:	IT MEANS
NON-MACHINE WASHING	Hand wash	Laundry only by hand in luke warm (hand comfortable) water. May be bleached. May be drycleaned
	Hand wash only	Same as above, but do not dryclean
	Hand wash separately	Hand wash alone or with like colors
	No bleach	Do not use bleach
	Damp wipe	Surface clean with damp cloth or sponge
HOME DRYING	Tumble dry	Dry in tumble dryer at specified setting — high, medium, low or no heat
	Tumble dry Remove promptly	Same as above, but in absence of cool-down cycle remove at once when tumbling stops
	Drip dry	Hand wet and allow to dry with hand shaping only
	Line dry	Hand damp and allow to dry
	No wring No twist	Hang dry, drip dry, or dry flat only. Handle to prevent wrinkles and distortion
	Dry flat	Lay garment on flat surface
	Block to dry	Maintain original size and shape while drying
IRONING OR PRESSING	Cool iron	Set iron at lowest setting
	Warm iron	Set iron at medium setting
	Hot iron	Set iron at hot setting
	Do not iron	Do not iron or press with heat
	Steam iron	Iron or press with steam
	Iron damp	Dampen garment before ironing
MISCELLANEOUS	Dryclean only	Garment should be drycleaned only, including self-service
	Professionally dryclean only	Do not use self-service drycleaning
	No dryclean	Use recommended care instructions. No drycleaning materials to be used.

What Are The Child's Needs?

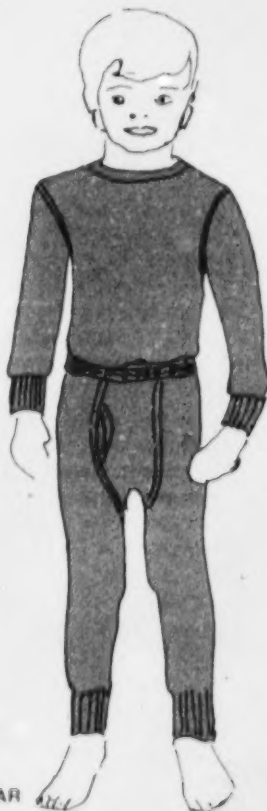
Because problems of dressing vary greatly with individuals and the severity of their physical limitations, there are no definite rules to follow in selecting clothes for any child. There are guidelines that you can use in making decisions about specific items of apparel. It is the sum total of all the garments a child wears that contributes to the ease of his or her dress routine.

Clothing styles change with what is happening in the world; fashion dictates whether clothes will be cut tight and close to the body or loose and flowing. It determines your choices in the marketplace, so as styling changes what is available, you must be able to search for those garments that will help your child to gain or retain independence. Whether it be total or partial independence, "doing for oneself" contributes to a healthier and happy life.

Whenever possible, let your child participate in the selection process. Once the dressing routine has been conquered the child will have a real contribution to make in letting you know what is comfortable and easy to manipulate.

UNDERWEAR

Children's underwear is simple in cut and made to provide comfort and protection. The bulk of the underwear on the market is made of a blend of polyester and cotton. In recent years, thermal underwear has become increasingly popular, particularly in cold climates. For any individual who spends much time outside in cold weather and has problems with circulation or finds the lower energy-saving temperatures chilling, the added warmth of thermal underwear without an increase in bulk will be a desirable feature.



THERMAL UNDERWEAR

Underwear is sized for young (little) boys according to height measurements. The size designations used are: A(2-3), B(4-5), C(6-7).

Size A for boys 32½" - 38" tall

Size B for boys 38½" - 44" tall

Size C for boys 44½" - 49" tall

There may be slight variations in height ranges from one manufacturer to another, but this range represents the size chart used by a large mail order house.

Boys' sizing ranges from 8 to 20 in even numbers and is based on height and chest measurements for shirts and height and waist measurements for pants. Husky sizing has a similar size range, but the measurements are for a heavier body type.



**BRIEF-STYLE
SHORTS**



**RACER-STYLE
SHORTS**

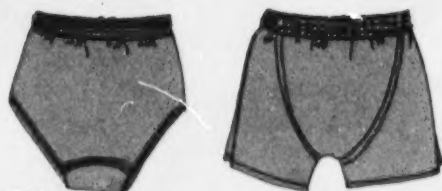


**BOXER-STYLE SHORTS
WITH SIDE VENTS
IN STRAIGHT LEGS**

Boys' and Young Men's Underpants

Briefs are available in knits, usually polyester and cotton or all cotton, in regular or low-rise style. For young children, the low-rise style may be more difficult to keep in place on the body, but the older child or young man may find low-rise briefs very comfortable. However, the smallness of the low-rise style may be harder to manipulate on and off if there is hand involvement.

Boxer-style shorts are usually made of woven fabrics, but some manufacturers make a boxer style in knitted cotton. Both the racer style and boxer legs with side vents provide more room and may be easier to get on and off if thighs are large.



**SEAMLESS OR CONTOUR SEATS
ARE MORE COMFORTABLE FOR SITTING**

For boys who use a wheelchair: Knitted briefs may be more comfortable for sitting because there is no excess fabric to wrinkle, crease, and creep up. Sitting on bunched-up or binding fabric can cause skin marks and irritations leading to the breakdown of sensitive skin. A boxer style may make it easier for a child to slide along a board to transfer from a wheelchair to tub, bed, or other surfaces. Bare skin has a tendency to stick on the board.



**REINFORCING BOXER SHORTS
WITH OUTSIDE FABRIC PATCH**



For boys who wear long leg braces or prostheses:

Strong fabrics with reinforcements for longer wear are necessary because these devices wear out rapidly under clothing. Polyester/cotton blends will also give added wear. You can save added expense by reinforcing areas of wear before holes are made by brace locks. One suggestion is to stitch a layer of the same kind of fabric as the garment — that is, knit or woven — to the area of the underpants where there is greatest wear. Be sure to stitch the layer of fabric to the outside of the garment so there is no chance of rubbing or chafing the skin.

Adaptations

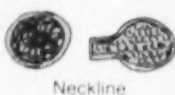
If you have an automatic sewing machine, stitch the patch on the underpants using a zig-zag stitch for added strength. If you do not sew, you might try fusing webbing or interfacing material. You can find these fabrics in fabric stores or at notions counters; ask for fusible webbing or iron-on interfacing. There are many different brands. Some come prepackaged in strips for added convenience. Follow instructions for application, and the webbing or interfacing material will stay attached when the garment is laundered.

Adaptations and reinforcements are often the answer to clothing problems, so if you do not sew yourself or do not have a family member who can do this for you, explore your community for dressmakers or tailors. You might also investigate resources such as volunteers at a local rehabilitation center or youth programs such as 4-H or extension services.

For boys with weak arms or limited use of hands: Boxer-style shorts with elasticized back, plain front, and snap fastener opening will be a better choice for boys who have difficulty pulling elasticized waistbands over the buttocks. If the snap fasteners are difficult to manage, Velcro fasteners may be used as a replacement.

Velcro fasteners are convenient for anyone who has little strength in the hands or lacks the coordination necessary to push and pull buttons through buttonholes. These fasteners consist of two patches or strips with one piece made of tiny polyester hooks and the other piece made of nylon loops. When these two pieces come in contact with one another, they stick together. The fastener is opened by pulling or peeling the pieces apart. According to the manufacturers, the holding strength of Velcro is related to the pressure applied when closing the fastener.

There are precut Velcro fasteners in various sizes and strengths with specific use recommendations. The $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch light stress circles are recommended for cuffs, lapels, pockets, and belt ends. The $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch medium stress circles are recommended for dresses, jackets, robes, and crotch closings for toddler clothing or body suits. The $\frac{7}{8}$ -inch heavy stress squares are recommended for sportswear, coats, belts, and children's clothing. There are also pieces shaped to replace the conventional hook and eye fastener at necklines or skirt strips for adjustable waistbands.



Used in place of buttons or behind buttons on shirts, dresses, jackets, robes

VELCRO FASTENERS

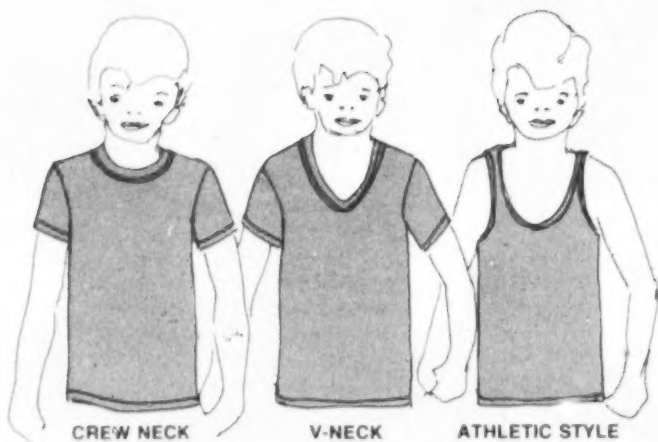


SNAP FASTENERS
ON BOXER SHORTS



VELCRO FASTENER
ON BOXER SHORTS

Velcro fasteners do not lose their ability to grip when washed or dry-cleaned, but it is advisable to always close the fasteners before putting the garment in the washer. This keeps the lint from collecting on the hook side of the fastener. Also, it prevents snagging of other fabrics during laundering.



Boys' Undershirts

The most important feature is a large or expandable neck opening that will make it easier to pull the shirt on over the head. There are three styles to choose from: The crew neck T-shirt, the V-neck T-shirt, and the sleeveless athletic shirt. The rib knit band of the crew neck will stretch to go on over the head, but may require more pulling and arm manipulations to get it over the ears, nose, and chin. The V-neck shirt allows for a larger opening, is easier to put on, and requires less shoulder and arm movements. Of course, the athletic shirt has a much larger opening for the head, but the neck opening is difficult to distinguish from the armholes. This is a more confusing style for someone learning how to dress independently. The athletic shirt also provides less protection and warmth.

For boys who wear braces or prostheses: The standard T-shirt with rib knit neck bands and reinforced shoulder seams, made from a polyester/cotton blend for added strength, is most comfortable under braces. The shirt also protects the brace from perspiration but, in turn, needs to be protected from the wear and tear of braces. Reinforce your boy's undershirt in the same manner as you reinforced his underpants. See page 16.

The T-shirt is also recommended for wearing under all upper extremity prostheses to pad the skin area and to protect the harness straps from perspiration.

Girls' Underpants

For girls who use a wheelchair: Cotton knit panties are usually more comfortable than nylon underpants because cotton knits are absorbent, cooler, and stretch with the body. However, nylon panties are now made with cotton crotches to give some of these same features. Some have a cotton terry cloth crotch that does not chafe and has a high absorbency. For girls with wide hips, some of the panty styles are made to accommodate outsized hip measurements. For the young girl wearing children's sizes, panties are available in sizes A-B-C. A is for 2 and 3; B, for 4 and 5; and C, for 6 and 6X. Girls' sizes are S(7-8), M(10-12), L(14-16). Juniors go by hip sizes, S(32-34), M(35-37), L(38-40).

If a longer leg style is wanted for ease in transferring from a wheelchair to another surface, there is a cotton knit sports panty with legs, elastic waist, and double fabric crotch for comfort and absorbency.

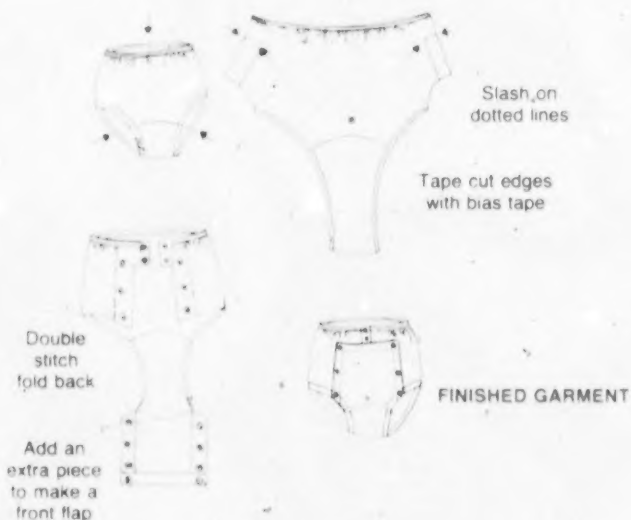


For those who complain that panties creep or wrinkle and bind, a cotton/Lycra spandex stretch panty with a cotton crotch for absorbency may be a good choice. The stretch characteristics of spandex give a smooth close fit and a soft, lightweight garment that moves with the body. The garment will resist abrasion and body oils and will not deteriorate from perspiration.

For girls who wear braces or prostheses: If a pelvic band is worn, it may be necessary to modify the girl's underpants so she is able to go to the bathroom without serious problems. The modification would provide a front opening below the waist and pelvic band.

Adaptations

To add a front opening, cut the panties open from waistband to crotch piece and then through the legs. Let the crotch piece fall down or open out flat. By adding a flap to the crotch piece, you will have a panty with a drop front rather than a drop seat. Snap fasteners or Velcro may be used to hold the flap in place. The flap may be made out of fabric similar to that used in the panties.



Another alteration that works especially well for girls who wear braces over their underwear is made by slashing the crotch seam of the underpants and taping the edges on both sides of the crotch. A Velcro fastener holds the crotch flap in place.

For girls who wear braces: Reinforce underpants in the areas of greatest wear. See boys' underwear, page 16.

Girls' Undershirts or Vests

The vest-type shirt is worn by young children who have good range of motion and are able to distinguish armholes and neck openings; the regular crew neck T-shirt with short sleeves is, however, a better choice during the learning process. If you cannot find this style in the size you want, a T-shirt can be easily purchased in the boys' department.



VEST
Available in
sizes 2-6X



SHORT CAMISOLE TOP
Available in
sizes 6-14

CAMISOLE TOP
Available in
teen and junior
sizing



The short camisole top is available in sizes 6-14 and may be a satisfactory choice for a child with no hand limitations or arm involvement.



Thermal underwear for girls is available in a variety of styles and fabric combinations so there should be one that best suits your child's needs.

THERMAL UNDERWEAR STYLES

Bras

When your girl is ready to wear a bra, be sure to buy one that is the correct size and gives her the proper support. To be sure that the size of the bra is correct, take the following measurements:

Chest measurement - taken across the back, under the arms, and above the bust

Bust measurement - taken over the fullest part of the bust

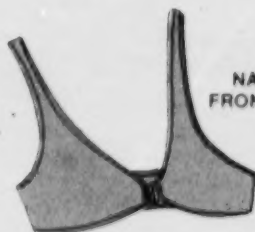
The bra size is the chest measurement; that is, if the chest is 34, the bra size is 34. The cup size is the difference between the chest and bust measurement.

Cup Size

- A . . . if bust measurement is 1" above bra size
- B . . . if bust measurement is 2" above bra size
- C . . . if bust measurement is 3" above bra size
- D . . . if bust measurement is 4" above bra size
- DD . . . if bust measurement is 5" above bra size

Styling is so varied that there seems to be a bra for every figure type. For the smaller figure, the natural look of the seamless nylon stretch bra provides a comfortable fit. There is less chance that the bra will bind or irritate the skin than if a more structured bra is worn. Structured bras are usually made from stable fabrics, such as woven cotton or cotton/polyester blends. Stretch straps cut into the shoulder less than adjustable straps with elastic backs.

Front opening bras are considerably easier to put on and fasten, especially for those who have limited range of motion, weak hands, or visual problems such as lack of side vision.



**NATURAL-STYLE
FRONT-OPENING BRA**

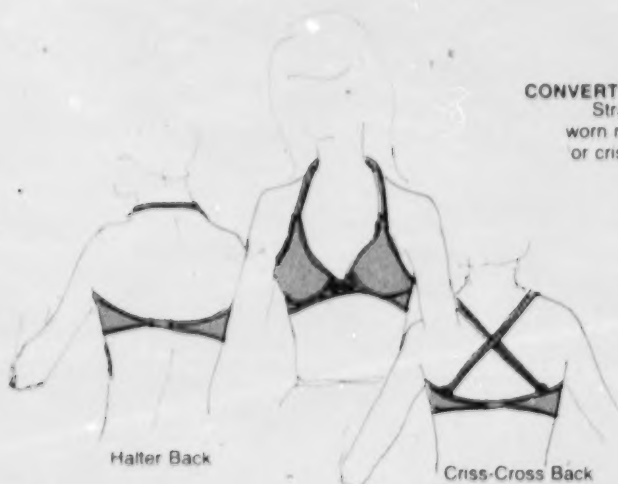
Hook fastener
used on
front-opening bra



For girls with posture problems or involuntary movements: Adjustable, wide bra straps or built-up stretch straps stay in place better than narrow straps. Some sports bras have a built-up stretch back, which keeps straps in place. Again, stretch straps would be more desirable than stationary ones. Adjustable straps that can be converted into a halter-style bra or criss-cross styled back will also stay in place and help to keep the bra in position.

CONVERTIBLE-STYLE BRA

Straps can be
worn regular,
halter,
or criss-cross style



Halter Back

Criss-Cross Back

Adaptations for bras

If involuntary movements cause straps to fall off the shoulders or shift position, stitch a piece of elastic or stretch tape across the shoulder area of the front-opening bra to help hold the straps in place. Another solution is to look for bras with built-up backs.

If you cannot find a bra with a front closure for the large-busted girl who needs more support than the stretch styles offer, buy one with a back closure and convert it to an opening in front. Usually support bras in sizes over 36C have wider straps and wider backs. Some also have a shoulder strap to prevent indentation of the shoulder and irritation to the skin.



**OVER-THE-HEAD
OR STEP-IN SPORTS BRA**
No fasteners



Bras with no fasteners are available, too. These are known as step-in bras or pull-on bras and can go on over the head, be stepped into, or pulled up over the hips and shoulder. There are also pull-on sports bras that have a built-up back. Designed to stay in place during active movements of sports, the style should certainly stay in place on someone who has excess motion of arms and shoulders.



Up-and-down
stretch panel
in back

POSTURE BRAS



Support panels across the back

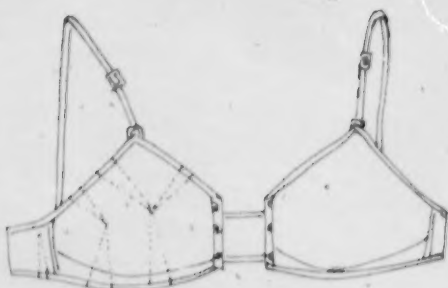


Front opening

For the girl who has a large bust and needs back support or posture control, there are built-up bras that criss-cross in back or have up-and-down stretch panels in back. These styles have front closures and wide adaptable straps.

Long-line bras are another choice for the full, large, or pendulous bust. They have good cup support, stay in place on the body, and provide a comfortable fit. Side panels should be made of stretch fabrics to allow for body movement.

Girls who are smaller on one side than the other can find wrap-style bras that adjust to a difference in cup size and have a front closure. This wrap style would be a good choice only for those having no hand involvement since the adjustable fasteners are difficult to manipulate and require fine hand-eye coordination. Small darts or tucks stitched on the smaller cup side will give a customized fit also.



BRA ALTERATION FOR CUP SIZE

Fold darts on dotted lines and stitch on the machine. Dotted lines represent areas where darts may be made. Take in darts in as many areas as needed.



NO WAIST SLIP
Available
in sizes 3-6X



**GIRLS' A-LINE STYLE SLIP
WITH ADJUSTABLE STRAPS**
Available in sizes 7-14

Slips

Young children seldom wear slips except for special occasions when a party-type dress is worn. Slips are simple A-line cuts with no shaping and built-up straps. They go on easily over the head. However, if children have difficulty with over-the-head type garments, the full slip can be readily eliminated from the wardrobe or substituted by an elasticized half slip.

Older girls, particularly in the teen years, may find slips to be a necessity under certain kinds of clothing.

For girls who wear braces: Half slips have more fullness through the hip area than full-length slips; however, they sometimes ride up on the figure or get caught in other clothing. A slip need not be worn under skirts or dresses that are lined. A slip can help to keep the skin from itching or being irritated by rough outer fabrics.



Slip and bra can be combined in one, thus eliminating the need to put on two garments. The bra slip is a more fitted style and should have a front closure that extends deep enough to give room for easy dressing, ideally a center-front zipper opening.

**BRA SLIP
WITH FRONT
OPENING**

Slips should be made of soft, nonclinging, antistatic fabrics that are machine washable. They are available in sizes 3-6X, 7-14, and chubby 8½-16½; older girls buy by bra size.

A camisole, too, can substitute for the slip and may be especially appropriate for those with lower extremity involvement.

Protective Pants

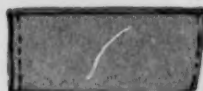
Many young children who are incontinent wear diapers, which never seem to give them adequate protection. A wet, smelly child is not easily accepted in social settings and, in fact, is often rejected by other children in school. Therefore, selecting the style of protective pants that gives protection and is nonirritating to the skin will contribute to your child's happiness and adjustment to school.

Protective pants are expensive in comparison to regular underpants, but the expense is worthwhile if it helps the child to feel accepted by other children. To assure a good fit and satisfactory protection, look for protective pants that have adjustable waistlines and leg bands. These are usually sized according to waist measurements and are available in S, M, L, and XL. The letter designation covers a range of waist measurements of 5 inches or 6 inches. For example, S (small) may be for a waist from 20-25 inches while XL (extra large) may be for a waist from 38-44 inches or 46-52 inches.

Supply houses list measurements in their catalogs; if you purchase directly from a professional firm that specializes in sales and rental of convalescent supplies and equipment, you will find measurements listed on the packages.



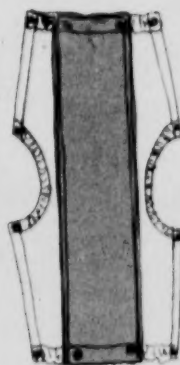
**PROTECTIVE PANTS
WITH ADJUSTABLE WAIST**



**Disposable
Liners**



**PROTECTIVE PANTS
WITH ADJUSTABLE
WAIST AND LEGS**



**Snap-in
Cotton Flannel
Liners**

Some styles are made of nylon knits with a soft waterproof vinyl coating on the outside and disposable liners attached to the inside. The front of the pants drop to allow for easy changing, and the garment opens flat. Fasteners may be snaps or Velcro tabs. Another style is a nylon knit brief with an olefin liner next to the skin that allows moisture to pass through the liner to cotton flannel layers, which snap in and out of the pants.

If the child wears long leg braces: It will be helpful to take his or her hip measurements over the braces to determine if there will be adequate room in the pants you buy. If you find a larger size is necessary, adjustable legs and waist will be essential to provide protection.

Consult your local rehabilitation agencies for more detailed information on protective clothing and equipment for the incontinent. Some agencies have patterns available for protective pants, and you may be able to save money and get a better fit by making them at home.

FOOTWEAR

Socks and Stockings

Socks can be troublesome items to pull on over the heel of the foot and up on the leg, but the no-heel tube socks eliminate some of the difficulty. Because the sock is not shaped to the foot, it does not have to go on in a specific way.

To give added comfort, some socks are made with absorbent terry in the area of the foot. This not only absorbs perspiration, but also acts as a cushion for the foot. Another feature that can be found on socks is an odor-control finish such as Bioguard. Look for tops that stay up because stretch nylon is knitted into the rib-knit construction.

Socks are bought by S, M, L, and XL sizing in children's, boys', and girls' ranges or by A, B, C, and D sizing sometimes used to designate children's socks. The letters designate a range of shoe sizes; for example, in children, S (small) fits shoe sizes 1 - 4½, M (medium) fits 5 - 8½, L (large) fits 9 - 13½, and XL (extra large) fits 1 - 4½.

Crew socks are popular styles for boys, while knee socks and tights are worn by girls. Acrylics and stretch nylon or cotton, polyester, and nylon blends are the fibers found in these socks.

If the child wears leg braces: Knee-high socks and tights are good for keeping legs warm in cold weather. Thermal knit socks of wool and nylon will also provide added warmth, or any of the leg warmers may be beneficial. Older girls may prefer to wear pantyhose. Pantyhose with a cotton crotch or a panty knit into the hosiery eliminates the need for two garments. Since braces, wheelchairs, and crutches are notoriously damaging to hosiery, select no-run mesh hosiery, for longer wear. If pantyhose are difficult for the girl to manipulate, select seamless hosiery. To keep the hosiery up, choose a garter belt with a front-hook closure or wrap-style waist held with Velcro.

Knee-length, over-the-knee length, and calf-length hosiery are readily available, but their elasticized tops interfere with circulation in some instances and, therefore, are not recommended.

Shoes

Shoes are one of the biggest obstacles in learning dressing techniques. Shoes are difficult to get on and off the foot, and tying of laces requires full motor coordination.

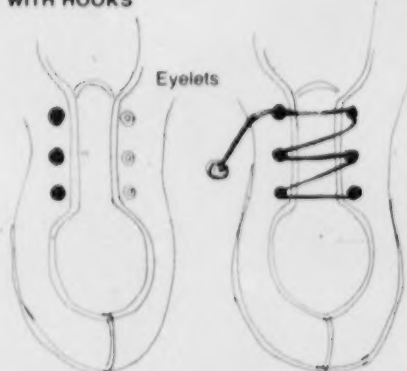
Some shoes do not require lacing and tying, but frequently do not give the support needed. Moccasin and loafer styles are examples of slip-into shoes, but some children have difficulty keeping these on their feet.

Fortunately, high shoes no longer carry the stigma they used to; ankle-high work shoes and hiking boots or shoes have become very commonplace. If your child is required to wear high corrective shoes for support or to help improve posture and body balance, you may have to adapt a lacing method in order for the child to manage this aspect of dressing. Elastic shoelaces are available, but are sometimes difficult to manipulate. Most children are more capable of managing a zipper that has been substituted for the laces. The insertion of a zipper would have to be made by a skillful shoe repairman. The opening must be extended in length to give adequate room for getting in and out of the shoe with ease. A ring should be added to the zipper tab to make it easier to grasp and pull up.

If the shoes' eyelets are replaced by hooks, such as those found on field boots or workman's shoes, the shoes can then be laced in one direction.

One end of the lace is fastened to a hook permanently; the other end has a small ring attached. The child laces around the hooks and fastens the ring on the top hook.

EYELETS REPLACED WITH HOOKS

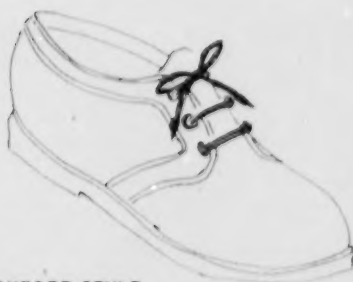


SHOE WITH
PADDED COLLAR



The padded collar that first appeared on shoes for sports activities can now be found on oxford styles as well as boots and high shoes. This collar or top line should provide added comfort by eliminating cutting into the ankle or the area around the shoe top.

For the child whose legs are paralyzed: Extra care must be taken to keep the child's feet free from infection. Select a shoe style that will allow for some swelling of the feet. An oxford style with the tongue and vamp cut in one place or a low-cut vamp are good choices. The vamp is the part of the shoe that covers the instep.



OXFORD STYLE
WITH TONGUE AND VAMP
CUT IN ONE PIECE

A teen-age girl may want fashionable shoes for special occasions even though she is unable to walk. To fulfill her desire to be like other girls her age and still have shoes that will fit her feet correctly, special care must be taken in the selection. Some slipper styles may fulfill her requirements, but generally a strap is needed to keep the shoe on the foot. If need be, a strap may be added to shoes by a shoe repairman.

For the child who wears corrective shoes with leg braces: Girls in particular complain about the lack of color choice in high shoes. Since color does not interfere with comfort and fit, why not ask the salesperson if a specific color may be requested when the order is placed. If the response is negative write to the manufacturer and make your request.

Children with flail or spastic feet may need shoes that lace down to the toe to enable them to get their feet into the shoes. With an opening made to the toe, the shoe can be opened wide enough to accommodate the foot.

Children who drag their feet or crawl as a means of locomotion wear out the toes of shoes very rapidly. While there is no way to prevent this kind of wear, reinforced toes, such as that found on athletic shoes (sneaker styles), extend the wearing time.



SHOE WITH
REINFORCED TOE AREA

To help keep feet dry, spray shoes with silicone. This gives the shoes a protective coating and makes them water repellent.

Shoes are expensive items, and children should be taught how to put them on and take them off properly so there is no damage to the shoe. Good shoe care will help to protect the family's investment in quality shoes. If you have questions about the style shoe best suited to your child, the child's doctor may be able to advise you.

Slippers

Slippers are usually easy to slip on and off by the very nature of the softness of their construction. The problem may be how to keep the slipper on.

If the child has "restless" feet: Look for boot-style slippers with zipper openings. Some styles have a zipper down the front with a snap-fastened collar that fits around the ankle. Others have a zipper at the center back seam. This would be ideal for anyone who has difficulty putting feet into a slipper or shoe. Fleece-lined slipper boots of this kind are warm.

Young girls may prefer a boot-style slipper with elastic loops and button closure on the side. The side opening makes the slipper easy to put on, and easy-to-close fasteners help to keep the slipper on the foot. This style is usually made of an acrylic pile fabric and is machine washable. Slippers that are machine washable are a definite advantage because they can be kept neat and clean with little effort. This is especially helpful to the child who cannot control movements and may spill things.



**SLIPPER STYLES THAT ARE WARM AND
COMFORTABLE
AND STAY ON THE FEET**

If warmth has a high priority, down-filled slipper socks, made of nylon and quilted with down as the insulator, are ideal. Although more expensive than most slipper styles, they are long-wearing and perfect for keeping the feet warm.

Slipper socks for boys and girls are another possible choice. They provide warmth, in addition to being easy to put on, and are available in a wide size range.

Some children find slippers necessary because they wear footed pajamas that have skid resistant plastic soles attached to the feet.

Boots and Overshoes

For those who live in cold climates, boots are an essential item of apparel. Boots are available in over-the-shoe or over-the-foot styles; which style is most suitable for your child will depend on the child's ability to put on shoes and socks.

If boots go over shoes, look for styles that have an opening on the side or front of the boot. An opening makes it easier to slip the boot on over the shoes. Zippers are ideal fasteners for boots, for snow and water do not leak through the zipper closure as readily as other styles. Rubber boots of one-piece molded construction are lightweight and give protection from the weather.

When a child is going to be outside in very cold weather for an extended period of time, then the boot that goes over the foot is recommended. This boot provides added warmth either because of a pile lining or a removable felt liner. The felt liner protects the feet from the cold when temperatures are very low. Another style having a high performance level for keeping feet dry has a nylon top and waterproof shoe formed by a one-piece molded construction. This style opens in front with a zipper fastener.

It is also important to look for boots with nonskid soles to prevent slipping.



- A. Boot with nylon top and waterproof shoe of one-piece molded construction. A removable felt liner is inside the boot.
- B. Waterproof rubber boot with soft pile lining, slip-on style.
- C. Waterproof rubber boot with front zipper. Can be worn over shoes.
- D. Waterproof vinyl boot worn over shoes.

SLEEPWEAR

Two specific federal standards specify that all children's sleepwear, sizes 0-14, must be flame resistant. This automatically gives your child added protection, but does not mean that the sleepwear is fireproof. It means that the garment is self-extinguishing when removed from flame.

The majority of fabrics being used in sleepwear sizes 0-14 are made of brushed nylon or polyester knits, modacrylic/polyester blend knits, or cotton flannels.

Over-the-head style pajamas are available in sizes from toddler through adult. Over-the-heads have no fasteners, but whether they are easier to manipulate than coat-style pajamas will be determined by a child's own ability and strength. Often this style has attached feet with skid-resistant plastic soles. The advantage of the footed sleeper is in the added warmth provided. It is a particularly good choice for children who cannot control foot movements and find it difficult to keep slippers on their feet.

For the child with weak muscles or limited shoulder movement: Pajama tops with front openings will be easier to get on and off than those that go on over the head. Buttons, grippers, or Velcro fasteners may be used; select the fastener that your child can manipulate with ease.

Pajama pants with elastic in the back are easier to pull up and over the hips than those with elastic all around the waist. This style requires a fastener in the front.

If the child has limited use of one or both hands: Over-the-head style pajamas with no fasteners will be a wise choice. Be sure they have rib knit bands so they expand easily and do not require extra strength by the arms or legs to push through the tunnel opening of sleeves and pants.

Children with a large head or limited head control will need a larger neck opening than the crew style provides. Look for V-necks or stylized expandable necks.



A. Over-the-head style sleepwear with feet

B. Over-the-head sleepwear with expanded neck opening

C. Coat-style pajamas



NIGHTSHIRTS AND NIGHTGOWNS
WITH EXPANDABLE NECKLINES

For the child with limited movement of the lower extremities: Nightshirts or gowns with front plackets or enlarged necklines might be a good choice because they eliminate the need for struggling with pants.

Girls may find gowns easier to manage than pajamas provided the necklines are suitable for easy dressing. Some children prefer to sleep in their underwear, and this is another option.

TOPS AND BOTTOMS

The major items in any child's wardrobe are tops or shirts and blouses and bottoms or pants, shorts, or skirts. The versatility of these types of garments gives the possibility of mix-and-match changes. Most important to you and your child is that they simplify the dressing process.

Shirts

Knit tops and sports shirts should be selected by first checking the following features in relation to the child's muscle strength and coordination as well as range of motion: Neck openings, fasteners, sleeve styles, and fabrics.

Whether you choose a slip-on style or an open-down-the-front shirt will depend on the boy's ability to move his arms and shoulders. Whenever range of motion is limited, full front openings are easier to get on and off.



KNIT SHIRTS WITH
EXPANDABLE NECKLINES



CREW NECK



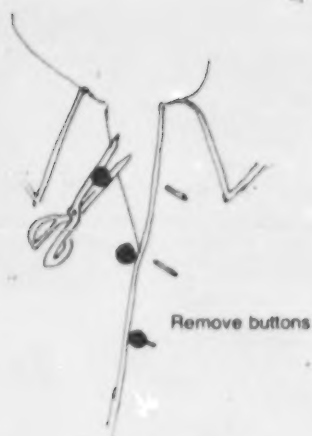
TURTLENECK

For the child with limited use of hands: Select knit slip-on tops with expandable necklines or placket styles that will expand to go on over the head and shoulders with ease. The "no-fastener" feature of this style adds to the appropriateness of the top.

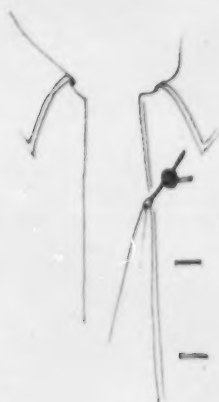
Snap fasteners or bands at the shoulders give added head room, but are not available in sizes over 4. Also, young children learning to dress will find the fasteners difficult because they are hard to see. Shirts of this kind are best suited to children who are dressed by someone else.

Fabrics used most frequently are knitted jerseys or interlocks and terry or velour-type knits. Fiber content is usually a blend of polyes. or and cotton or 100% acrylic. Stripes or printed patterns are a good choice for a child who cannot control motions because spills or spots do not show up as readily as they do on solid colors.

While sports shirts are worn most frequently, both the woven sports shirt and dress shirt have many similar features. These usually have collars, front openings, and sleeves either long or short. The dress shirt is usually worn with a tie.

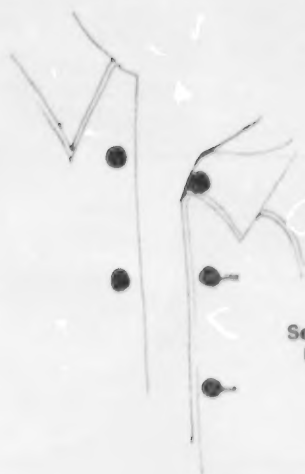


Remove buttons



Sew buttons
over buttonholes

The buttons found on shirts are small and awkward to push through a buttonhole, so you might try substituting Velcro fasteners. This keeps the appearance of the shirt looking like everyone else's shirt, but with fastening made easier.



CONVERSION OF A BUTTON FRONT
OPENING TO VELCRO FASTENERS

Sew Velcro fasteners to places where buttons had been located and behind buttonholes.

To solve the problem of how to tie a tie, buy pretied neckties, either bow or four-in-hand. There are various clip-on styles available.

For boys who use a wheelchair: Shirts or tops with pockets are more functional than those with no pockets. Since it may be more difficult to reach into the pants pockets while sitting in a wheelchair, the shirt pocket may be used for keeping identification cards, money, and other items.

For boys with weak arm muscles: Long-sleeved shirts are easier to put on and take off if they have an open cuff. You or the child can reach inside the sleeve to help get his weak arm through. Long sleeves with open cuffs need a fastener to hold the cuff closed; either use the Velcro adaptation or try using an elastic cuff link.

Adaptation of cuffs on shirts

Shirts with long sleeves may have the button on the cuff sewn over the buttonhole and Velcro fasteners inserted behind it.



BUTTON CUFF



VELCRO FASTENER
REPLACING BUTTON CUFF



ELASTIC CUFF LINK



Buttons stitched to elastic
give an expandable cuff.

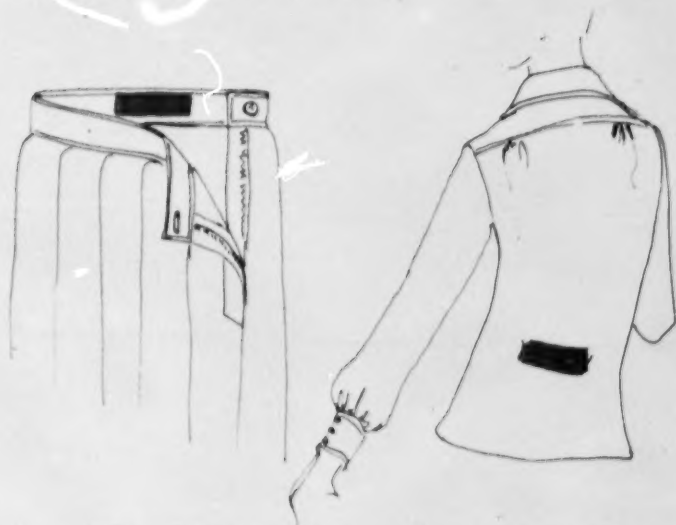
To add an elastic cuff link, remove the button from the cuff and in its place make a buttonhole to match the other side of the cuff. Sew two buttons together on an elastic thread with at least a $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch space between the buttons. Slip the button links through the buttonholes.

Sleeve styles that provide the greatest amount of room in the armhole area are raglan styles. However, most shirts have an enlarged armhole with a set-in sleeve. The addition of the stretch characteristics of the fabric provides enough room to get the arms through the sleeve area.

Girls' shirts are not too different from boys' shirts; most have the same small buttons on front openings. Where there is hand involvement, the Velcro fastener adaptation (see page 35) may speed independence in dressing.

For girls who use crutches: Sometimes movements of the upper part of the body will pull shirts and blouses out of the waistbands of pants or skirts. This problem can be minimized by buying shirts for outside-the-waistband wear, such as overblouse or tunic styles or shirts with long shirttails for tuck-ins.

Adaptation of ready-to-wear



VELCRO TABS TO HOLD SHIRT AND SKIRT TOGETHER

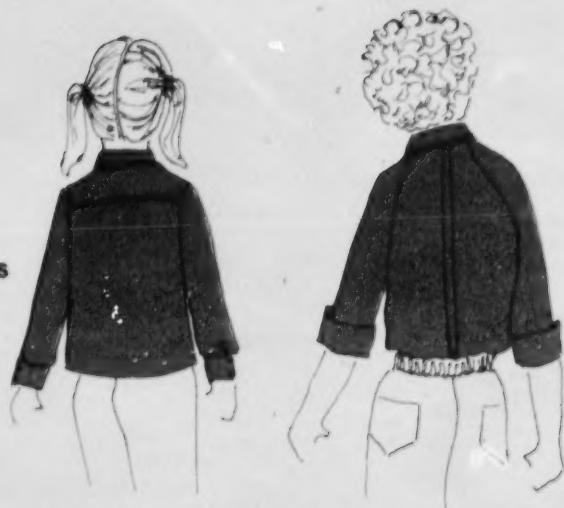
If separation of shirts and skirts or pants is a problem, try sewing rubberized patches into the waistband of shirts or pants. These patches are readily available in fabric stores or in notions departments of other stores. If additional holding power is needed, short strips or patches of Velcro can be attached to waistbands and also on the shirt or blouse. Place the strips on the shirt or blouse to allow for some blousing of the shirt and to give adequate room for up-and-down movements. The location of the strips of the garment will be dependent on body movement. If movements put extra strain or pull on the underarm area, put the strip of Velcro in this area. If there is more pull through the back waist area, then put the strips across the back of the shirt.



**TWILL TAPE INSERTED
IN THE UNDERARM AREA**

If use of crutches causes shirts or blouses to rip in the underarm seam, look for shirts with flat-fell or double-stitched seams. Also, underarm seams can be reinforced by stitching a piece of twill tape into the seam or by double stitching the underarm seam.

SHIRTS WITH BACK FULLNESS



Where demands are unusual due to body movements, look for shirts that have yokes with fullness below or action pleats in back to provide more room. Avoid snug, close-fitting styles unless the fabric has good stretch characteristics.

Knit tops are frequently made of polyester and cotton blends. The basic difference between girls' and boys' knit tops is that there are more style variations for girls. You can find blouson styles with or without hoods, crew neck shirts with long, short, or cap sleeves. Peasant styles with gathered necklines have ties at the neck that can be worn open or tied in a loop or bow. Also, sleeveless styles are available for summer wear.

Sleeveless tops are cool and comfortable, but sometimes armholes are cut too low for girls who have small body structures or very short waistlines. Armholes can be raised by placing a piece of fabric in the underarm area. The fabric can be cut double and folded to act as a finished edge in the armhole. However, some ingenuity may be required for selecting contrasts or complementary pieces to make the adaptation acceptable aesthetically.

For girls who have lost an arm: Long sleeves may cover a prosthesis, but be sure the sleeves have adequate width at the wrist or a placket opening to give the space needed to slip the sleeve over the mechanical workings of the artificial limb.

Three-quarter-length sleeves or full-length sleeves that roll up or can be pushed up may be a better choice if a child uses a wheelchair. Full-length sleeves tend to pick up dirt from the wheels.



Smock-style blouses are a good choice because they provide added room and are easy to put on and take off. They go on easily over braces or prostheses. Smocks are truly functional and can have yokes, smocking and gathers, quilting, and dozens of other details to make them interesting without interfering with function.

Skirts and Culottes

Wrap-style skirts are ideal for girls who do not have use of their lower limbs. Because of the adaptability of fit and comfort, this style skirt has become a classic and can usually be found in a variety of fabrics from denim to washable woolens. The back wrap not only simplifies the dressing procedure, but also makes toileting less complicated for anyone using a wheelchair. The wrap skirt also has the additional hip room that is usually required for someone who sits most of the time.

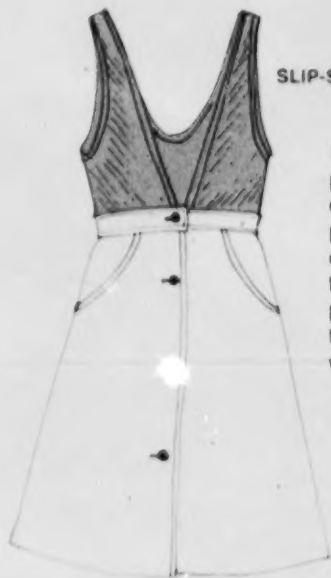
Any skirt that opens flat can be put on while a person is lying in bed or sitting up. The waistband can be fastened and the skirt arranged around the body as a final step. A variety of fasteners are used for waistbands, including buttons, Velcro, or belts that wrap around the waist. Girls who have limited use of their hands may find a Velcro front wrap helpful in achieving success in dressing.

For girls who have limited use of arms and hands: Front openings on skirts are better than side or back plackets. A zipper running at center front either the length of the entire skirt or only partially down the skirt may make the difference between dependence and independence. A zipper placket should have at least an 8-inch opening to give adequate room for getting the skirt up over the hips. A 9-inch or 10-inch opening would be even more convenient. A pull tab or ring added to the zipper tab will make grasping easier and contribute to ease in dressing.

Adaptation of ready-to-wear

To transfer a zipper from the left side to the right side, remove the waistband and zipper. If a zipper guard piece has been used behind the placket opening, remove the extra piece of fabric. Open the seam allowance on the right side and insert zipper with or without the guard piece. Stitch the zipper in place, restitch the left seam, and turn waistband so that the open end is now at the right side. Stitch the waistband in place and re sew fasteners for waistband.

The very young child who does not have a definite waistline may find it difficult to keep skirts in place on the body. If this is the case, straps or suspenders may be added. However, straps and suspenders may add difficulty to dressing, particularly for those whose movements are restricted or whose balance is poor. Pants would be a better choice.



SLIP-STYLE TOP ADDED TO A SKIRT

Skirts may also pose a problem, particularly to larger girls, by riding down when the wearer sits for long periods of time. This can be embarrassing, particularly when transferring from wheelchair to car in public places. One way to avoid this is to attach to the skirt a slip-like top that will hold the skirt in place.

Pockets in skirts provide a place for tucking a tissue, an identification card, or other items. Pockets can be decorative as well as functional; look for patch pockets placed low enough for hands to get in and out of while sitting or standing. Look for pockets deep enough to hold whatever the girl wants to place there.

Length of skirt may be a matter of great concern. Fortunately, skirts can be found in any length and can be worn at whatever length feels most comfortable. A girl in a wheelchair will always feel comfortable in a long skirt because concern about how she is sitting will be lessened. This is doubly important to those unable to control leg movements.

Elasticized waistbands or drawstrings provide adjustable waists for undersized bodies or extra width for girls who wear long leg braces and pelvic bands. The elasticized waist may present some problems in maneuvering the garment on and up over the hips. Fabric or tape loops may be added to the inside of the skirt to make it easier to pull a skirt on over the hips and up to the waist. However, the loops must be tucked inside after the skirt is in place.

Because the girl who uses crutches needs freedom for leg and hip action, the straight slim skirt is too restricting. A-line or gored skirts are more wearable. A skirt that is too full can get in the way; a skirt that is too long can cause tripping when the feet are swung.

For girls who use crutches, canes, or walkers or who walk with a jerky or uneven gait: Culottes look like skirts but have the freedom of pants. They are cut with roomy legs for ease in dressing and movement. Culottes may make toileting troublesome, although not any more than pants. They also may bunch up when worn over braces.

Pants

Pants are the most versatile garment for girls as well as boys because they are acceptable apparel for a wide range of activities. Pants provide freedom of motion if they are cut correctly through the crotch area and do not fit too snugly over hips, thighs, and calves. They provide added warmth for the lower part of the body and protect legs from drafts inside buildings and from cold winds outside. You can increase this feeling of warmth by selecting denim jeans or chino pants with cotton flannel linings or suggest that the child wear insulated underpants under the jeans. Pants also have cosmetic value in that they cover up physical imperfections, braces, or prosthetic devices.

Buying the proper size is essential for comfort and mobility. For "little" girls and boys, jeans are available in Slim or Regular sizes 3-6X. The size is determined by the child's height, and the waist measurement determines whether Slim or Regular should be the choice. For example, the following chart shows the difference between the two body types.

Size	3	4	5	6	6X
(Measurements in inches)					
Height	35½-38	38½-41	41½-44	44½-47	47½-49
Waist-Slim	19½	20	20½	21	21½
Waist-Regular	21	21½	22	22½	23

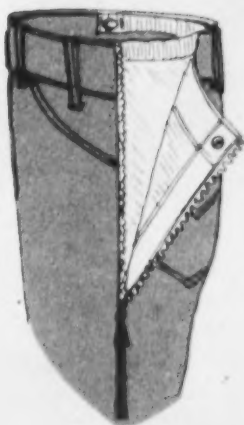
Growing boys and girls who wear sizes 8-20 or 7-14 have three body types in each size range: Slim, Regular, and Chubbies (also called Chubbets or Pretty Plus) for girls and Huskies for boys. When buying pants for girls, consider height, pants inseam measurement, and body type based on waist and hip measurements. For boys, consider height, pants inseam measurement, and body type based on waist measurement.

Of all the pants styles, jeans are the most universal garment, worn by young and old around the world. They are truly functional because they are made of sturdy denims or corduroys. A fourteen-ounce denim is considered the most durable weight. When polyester or nylon or both are blended with cotton, extra long-wearing qualities are added to the fabric. Well-made jeans have reinforced areas such as bar tacks or rivets at stress points — the corners of pockets, the end of fly front, and loops or tunnels on belts.

Jeans are a good choice for children who crawl or "hitch" into sitting position on the ground or floor as they play or exercise. Look for brands that have reinforced knee areas, or sew or iron on patches before the knees are worn through. Jeans with a Sanfor-Set label will not shrink and lose their fit.



COOKMAN PATENTED FEATURE
Two-way zippers and half belt



For older boys, jeans with the patented Cookman feature of two-way zippers in side seams are available through mail order from the manufacturer (see listing, Functional Fashions by Levi's, page 63). The patented feature allows the leg to be opened completely from the bottom up or from the top down. There is also a special inside half belt that holds the front of the pants in place when the seat is dropped.

If the child wears leg braces: Pants of any style may be difficult to get on over braces unless they are cut with extra width through the entire leg area. The width of pants is very dependent on fashion, and at times the availability of wide trouser legs may become very limited. If this happens, you will need to make an adaptation or have a tailor or dressmaker do it for you.

Adaptation of ready-to-wear

Two-way, full-length zippers should be inserted in the side seams (outseam) of each leg. This means that the waistband must be removed and the side seams opened. The two-way zippers make it possible to open the leg area as far as need be for easy dressing and also to open the waist as far as need be when going to the toilet.



Another alteration possibility is to insert zippers or Velcro into the inseam of pants. First, open the inseam by removing stitches from the length desired. Length will relate to the child's braces and the amount of room required. Insert the zipper so that the open end is at the hem or cuff edge of the pants. The zipper is inconspicuous and does not change the appearance of the garment. Remember that this is important to the child!

**ZIPPER INSERTED
IN THE INSEAM**



**INSEAM
OF PANTS**



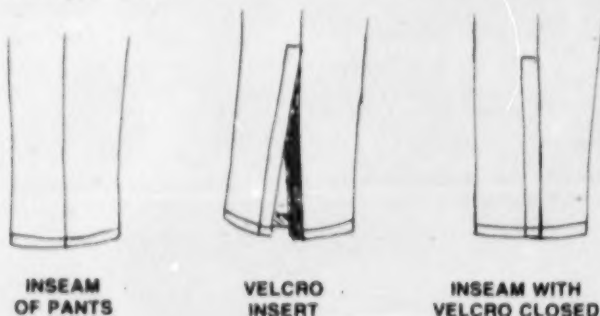
**VELCRO
INSERT**



**INSEAM WITH
VELCRO CLOSED**

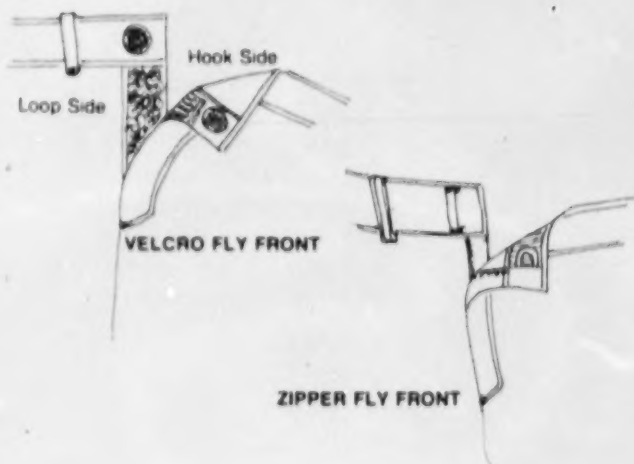
Velcro strips rather than zippers could be inserted into the inseam if they are easier for the child to handle. After opening the inseam press flat the seam allowance on the back leg and stitch a strip of Velcro (loop side) along the seam line. The hem or cuff of the pants will have to be turned back and stitched in place under the Velcro. Reinforce the end of the Velcro by double stitching.

Adaptation of ready-to-wear



On the front pants leg, turn back the seam allowance and stitch a strip of Velcro (hook side) along the fold. Stitch the cuff in place and reinforce the ends of the Velcro strip with double stitching.

It will be easier to make these adaptations on garments that are made with plain seams having overcast raw edges than on pants with flat-fell seams, such as those found on most jeans.



Children frequently have trouble closing the zipper fly front and locking the zipper at the top of the fly. To change a zipper fly to Velcro, remove the zipper and insert two strips of Velcro. Stitch the loop side to the right side of the underlay part and the hook side to the inside of the fly.

If the child wears long leg braces: Make additional reinforcements to slow down the damaging wear braces cause. To reinforce pants, jeans, overalls, and similar garments, iron a piece of fusible web to the inside area where the wear occurs.

Pants with elasticized back waist are available in sizes from young toddler through adult. These have the advantage of some adjustability of waist size and also help to keep the garment at the waistline. The full elastic waist for the very young child is easy because no fasteners are required. Children who achieve success in learning dressing techniques by wearing this convenient style may be encouraged to try other items of apparel.

**PANTS ELASTICIZED
IN BACK WAIST**



**PANTS ELASTICIZED
AROUND WAIST
WITH FRONT
SNAP OPENING**



**PANTS ELASTICIZED
AROUND WAIST
WITH NO FASTENERS**



Girls who need a fuller cut through the hips may find pants too large in the waist area unless an elasticized waist or adjustable waistband is part of the design. A simple adjustment can be made if neither of these waist features can be found. Extra fullness in the waistline can be controlled by stitching elastic webbing or belting to the inside of the waistband in back or sides or in both places. This suggestion can be applied to the waistline of any garment that needs adjusting through this area.

For the child who uses a wheelchair for mobility: Pants need to be cut for a sitting position rather than a standing position. This means that pants need to be longer in the back crotch seam length and shorter in the front seam length. This reduces wrinkling over the abdominal area and keeps the pants from riding down in back.

Overalls, Coveralls, and Jumpsuits



The advantage of overalls, coveralls, and jumpsuits is that once on the body the garment will stay in place and will not "ride" down as pants sometimes do. The disadvantages may be in sizing and in getting on and off. A one-piece garment that incorporates pants must be proportioned to the body. If too short in the crotch area, it will cut into the body causing discomfort and reducing mobility; if too long in the crotch area, it will interfere with walking and sitting comfort. Any child with very limited range of motion may have difficulty maneuvering the upper part of the body into the garment. Overalls or jumpsuits with long center-front openings, preferably with zipper fasteners, provide more room and are easier to put on and take off. Adjustable waistbands and shoulder straps contribute to better fitting.

Jumpsuits have helped some children with severe handicaps to learn to dress simply because, being two garments in one, there are fewer garments to put on. However, these suits are not very convenient when toileting unless adaptations are made to provide openings or drop seats.



**JUMPSUIT WITH
DROP SEAT IN BACK**

The crotch opening found on overalls for toddlers is so helpful for changing diapers that a similar idea is practical for use on garments for children who are incontinent or not completely toilet trained.

Adaptation of ready-to-wear



**ZIPPER CROTCH OPENING
IN OVERALLS**

Does not change the appearance
but does add to convenience



To insert a crotch opening in a regular pair of overalls or jumpsuit, open the inseam starting at the hem edge or cuff of one pants leg and continuing to the other pants leg. Press the inseam flat and insert a separating zipper in the opening. The zipper should be one inch shorter than the length of the opening. Reinforce ends of the opening.

Warm-up Suits

Another useful type of garment is the warm-up suit. Originally designed for active sportswear, the warm-up suit is so comfortable that it is now worn for many other purposes, including sleeping. The advantages are the customary absence of fasteners and the loose fit, which make the suit easy to put on and take off. The pants have either an elasticized or a drawstring waist with the legs hemmed or gathered into an elasticized cuff. Some styles have zippers in the lower leg to provide a wider opening for ease in dressing. The tops are pullovers with pouch pockets and hoods or crew necks. Some styles have zippered fronts with convertible collars that can form a close-fitting turtleneck when zipped all the way. The fabrics are knit and usually acrylic with a fleece lining for added softness and warmth. Sizing is usually in S(small), M(medium), L(large), XL(extra large) with each letter designation spanning two numerical sizes (i.e., S fits sizes 7 and 8 in girls' wear, 2 and 3 in children's wear, and 6 to 8 in boys' wear, or 34- to 36-inch chest and 29- to 31-inch waist in teen sizing).



DRESSES

For many girls, dresses have become garments that are worn for special occasions only. Dresses are considered to be less functional for everyday activities and do not have the same priority in wardrobes as separates or tops and bottoms.

In selecting dresses, consider build and age. Young girls do not have waistline indentations, so dresses without waistline seams are more comfortable. Ideally, dresses that hang loose from the shoulder area or from a yoke are more flattering to the underdeveloped figure. This style has become a classic for girls wearing sizes 2-6X and 7-14.

These styles are particularly good for children who wear body braces, have body irregularities, or walk with crutches. Cut with ample room, they allow freedom of movement. Dresses with waistline seams have a tendency to ride up when a person is seated for long periods of time. They also restrict movement and cause strain or pressure against the body because of the closeness of the fit.

When a girl grows out of girls' sizing into the preteen and teen years, she probably will be more clothes conscious than at any other previous age. Her clothing choices will be very much influenced by what other girls her age are wearing. Sometimes she may not be as practical in her wants as those around her would like her to be; it may take more planning to meet her needs and satisfy her desire to be like her friends. If dresses are important to her friends, they will be important to her, but if dresses are something worn at special events only, the styling will not be as crucial as the design incorporated into everyday items of apparel.

Shirtdresses and wrap styles are cut with more room across the shoulders and through the bodice area. These are classic styles that are usually available regardless of what trends are taking place in fashion. Fabric choices vary from oxford shirtings, rayon challis, and polyester crepes to soft knits in cotton, acrylics, or woolen blends. Shirtdress styles can be cut in a straight or slightly flared silhouette style and worn with a belt to control the fabric at the waist or can be cut with a waistline seam or gathered in at the waist with elastic. The first option has more flexibility because the dress can be belted according to the individual's own body proportions.



Point of Strain

Shirtdresses usually have a full-length center front opening or a deep placket part way down the garment. If the child has involuntary movements, the partial opening may not be a good choice because the end of the placket is often a point of strain.

Full-length, center-front button closures on dresses may be a problem to girls with hand involvements. If this is the case, substitute Velcro fasteners or insert a zipper.

Wrap styles have the advantage of no fasteners or a minimal fastener at the waistline. Inside ties for holding the overlap of the bodice can be replaced easily with a large trouser-type hook or a Velcro tab fastener.

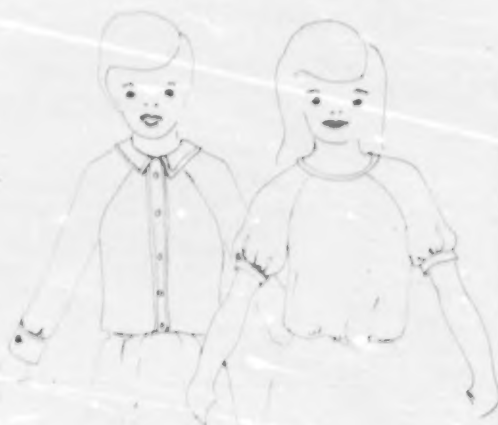
Avoid back openings unless the child absolutely needs assistance in getting in and out of clothing. Children who have very little ability to move their upper extremities may be guided easily into garments that fasten from the back.

Jumper dresses can be a solution for girls who find separates such as skirts impractical because they cannot keep them at the waistline. The built-up top holds the garment stable, and openings can vary from wrap styles to front zippers or over-the-head styles with no fasteners.

Figure-molding or clinging dresses probably should be avoided.

For girls who use a wheelchair: Two-piece styles may be more comfortable, allow greater freedom of movement, and eliminate the possibility of strain or pulling in the neck area. If dresses are belted, whether they be one-piece or two-piece, the belt should be sewn into the side seams of the garment, attached with belt loops, or kept in place some other way. Loose belts tend to ride up, particularly when a person is in a sitting position.

Raglan sleeves give more freedom of motion through the shoulder area. Because the underarm area is cut high, raglan sleeves are particularly functional for the girl who walks with the aid of crutches. Short or three-quarter-length sleeves are a good choice for those who use a wheelchair. Long sleeves cut with fullness and an adjustable cuff or band at the wrist are good "disguise" features. Lining long sheer or transparent sleeves with another sheer fabric will add opaqueness. If dresses with long sleeves are hard to find for all-important occasions such as school proms, it might be possible to order fabric from the manufacturer of the ready-to-wear dress of choice and add sleeves accordingly. The other option is to make — or have made — a special dress with all the right features that make a girl feel as important as the occasion.



RAGLAN SLEEVE STYLES



Sometimes hemlines need to be adjusted to posture or stance. Uneven hemlines caused by a forward stooped posture can be corrected by raising the hem in front and lowering it in back. If the child has an imbalance from side to side, then adjustment must be made in the hem similar to the front-back change. Again, two-piece dresses are a better choice than one-piece since the hang of the skirt is not affected by the upper part of the body, and the bodice is not affected by the lower part of the body.

**BODICE PULLS UP
IN BACK AND CREATES
UNEVEN HEMLINE**

HEM ADJUSTED IN BACK FOR ADDED BACK LENGTH

Hemline appears even

OUTERWEAR

Sweaters

Sweaters are functional garments because they often supply the little added warmth a person needs to be comfortable. They can be removed easily when desired, especially the cardigan styles. Cardigans can be fastened with large-sized buttons, Velcro fasteners, or zippers — depending on the child's ability to handle fasteners.

Coat sweaters that wrap are another choice. These are usually longer than cardigans and, if made of bulky yarns, provide greater warmth. They can be used to replace coats in certain climates. Hooded-style sweaters provide protection for the head and neck area and eliminate the need for hats or scarves. They are good protection against winds. Whatever style you select, look for machine washable sweaters in soft acrylic knits, which eliminate the need for elaborate hand washing and blocking or the expense of frequent dry cleaning.



Coats and Jackets

One factor that affects the ease with which a child puts on a coat or jacket is the weight of the garment. Select lightweight fabrics that give warmth without weight. For girls' cold weather coats, polyester bonded to tricot or acrylics with a polyester back give the look of woollens but a weight and price range that has appeal. These coats are usually machine washable for easy care. They are lined with acetate linings quilted with polyester fiber fill for insulation. Boys' cold weather coats are frequently made of corduroy and lined with pile fabrics. While the pile fabrics are warm, they do add weight. These coats are also machine washable.



**NYLON JACKET QUILTED
WITH POLYESTER FIBER FILL**

**CORDUROY COAT
WITH PILE LINING
AND ATTACHED HOOD**

Jackets for both boys and girls are made of either nylon or polyester and cotton blends and are usually insulated with polyester fiber fill or down to give warmth without weight. Quilting is required, however, to prevent the insulation from slipping.

Unlined nylon taffeta jackets are very wind resistant and are water repellent. They have front zippers and usually a drawstring at the bottom to help keep out cool breezes. Sometimes a brushed nylon lining is added to the outer shell to provide more protection from the weather.

Linings in coats and jackets need to be slippery to go on easily. Satins, taffetas, and twills of acetate or nylon are best suited for everyday lining materials. Cotton prints make attractive linings, but are more difficult to slip in and out of.

Pile linings give added warmth, but are usually bulky unless used in the body of the garment only and the sleeves lined with a quilted acetate for ease in dressing.

Armholes must be large enough to provide the space needed for manipulating arms through the sleeves. This is especially important for children who have involuntary movements, weak muscles, or limited shoulder movement. Jackets with back pleats, yokes, and gathers offer more room for children who require freedom of body movements.

For the child who uses crutches: Sleeves on coats cannot be too bulky or cut too deep. A crutch has to fit comfortably under the arm. If a Canadian or Loftstrand crutch is used, the arm cuffs must fit over the sleeves, so too much bulk must be avoided. Raglan sleeve styles generally give additional room without increasing bulk under the arms.

Wrist openings on sleeves are most helpful if the child has to manipulate a prosthesis or arm brace through the coat or jacket sleeve. Openings appear more commonly on jacket sleeves than on coat sleeves. Velcro may be used as a fastener for the opening.

For the child with poor muscle coordination: Velcro front closings are easier to manage than zipper or button fronts. Bringing a separate zipper together at the bottom of a jacket, cape, or coat is especially difficult. Velcro fasteners match up easily. A large snap fastener at the bottom helps to position the Velcro and can be handled by those with limited hand strength.

The length of a coat is important to children who use a wheelchair. Waist or high hip-length coats are more comfortable for sitting than full-length coats. Look for styles with pockets that are easy to reach from a sitting position.

Capes and Ponchos

Short-length capes are perfect for children who use a wheelchair. They are easy to put on and eliminate extra bulk. Capes are usually cut full enough to cover the top of the knees and give lap protection. A modification made by cutting the back of the cape shorter than the front will help the wheelchair user sit more comfortably. Capes are especially easy for children who have limited shoulder or arm movement since there are no armholes or tunnels to guide the arms through.

Capes can be made of woven or knitted fabrics and can be lined or unlined depending on the outer fabric and protection requirements. They can be fastened with buttons or zippers, or Velcro fasteners may be substituted if need be.

Ponchos are loose garments that slip over the head. They are often made of waterproof vinyl or urethane-coated nylon, which give excellent protection from rain. This style is particularly useful for the wheelchair user. A poncho may be slipped on easily over a jacket or coat. Some styles have hoods for additional protection. A poncho would not be a good choice for a child who uses crutches since there are no armholes or sleeves and the garment would interfere with the crutches. A waterproof slicker would be better.



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Snowsuits

Snowsuits may be difficult for many young children to manage alone. If the child is to be independent in dressing, select a snowsuit that has adequate openings. A one-piece suit with a zipper that extends from the neck down to the bottom of one leg provides adequate room for ease in getting in and out of the garment. An ankle zipper on the other leg will give additional room for a shoe to slip through the pants. Snowpants with built-up tops often have the same type of zipper opening. These pants are worn with a separate jacket. The two-piece suit with built-up snowpants gives double protection to the chest and back.

Nylon fabrics are used most frequently for snowsuits and are often treated with a urethane coating for water repellency.

ZIPPERS IN LEG AREA ADD TO EASE IN DRESSING

SWIMWEAR

Summer camps are often an important part of a child's life, and swimsuits are a part of the camper's wardrobe. Knitted nylon fabrics are quick drying and when combined with Spandex provide better-fitting suits. The fabric stretches with the body.

Look for suits that will be easy to get on and will slip off easily when wet. Two-piece styles may be easier for girls who have limited range of motion. Adjustable straps also are handy in that the top can be adapted to body build.

Boxer-type swim trunks are easier for boys to handle. They may be made of woven or knit fabrics and have racer or straight-cut legs.

HELPING CHILDREN TO HELP THEMSELVES

Some children with severe disabilities will not be able to manage all clothing items. If you cannot find ready-to-wear garments that encourage development of independence, it may be possible to have some clothing made to fit individual needs. Investigate your community to see if such services are available. Some mail order houses and small businesses are concerned with designing and manufacturing clothing to meet special needs. Check with occupational therapists at a nearby hospital or rehabilitation center for possible information. You might be able to communicate your child's needs to a local dressmaker or tailor. Regardless of the source, please remember that the child's clothing should not be conspicuously different from that which other children are wearing.

Some children are unable to distinguish between the top and bottom of clothing items or to understand the way a garment laps and closes. This may be due to perceptual difficulties. A child with this problem can be helped by garments that can be specially made.

FOR GIRLS

Right over Left
Dark over Light



Dark on Top
Light on Bottom



FOR BOYS

Left over Right
Dark over Light



Dark on Top
Light on Bottom



For example, if the child responds to color, use this as a teaching device. Make shirts or blouses with a darker color in front and a lighter color in back. The child can learn that the dark color goes in front and the light color goes in back. Color recognition and relationship can be used also for teaching children how to close a garment. For example, a child can learn to fasten a garment that has a red left side and pink right side by being told that red goes over pink.

Although garments with these color combinations would have to be made up specially, the idea is not too different from color ideas or patchwork effects created in sportswear in the ready-to-wear market.

Eventually, the child may be able to identify front from back by having a small color tab stitched on the inside of the garment. It certainly is worth a try!

Any closures must be located at the center front of garments worn by children who have no side vision. Recognition of the opening can be increased by placing decorative trim or contrasting bands on the opening. With some thought and planning, additions such as these can be used without destroying the appearance of the garment. Some can actually enhance a design.

TRAINING FOR INDEPENDENCE

The whole process of dressing involves taking clothes off, putting them on, fastening and adjusting them on the body — a simple activity that actually requires the mastery of complicated steps that lead to a dressing routine.

Teaching the skills involved with this routine requires that each activity be broken down into logical steps or sequences. What does taking off involve? The steps will vary with the type of garment. To begin, select the simplest of garments to keep the steps at a minimum. The following examples for undressing and dressing were taken from *The Instructional Manual for Teaching Dressing Skills to the Handicapped*, developed by Nancy Levitan-Rheingold at the University of Connecticut in 1977.

To remove a T-shirt:

1. Reach to the back of the neck opening with one hand.
2. Duck head.
3. Pull the shirt forward over head.
4. Use ____ (lead)* hand to grasp the edge of the opposite sleeve.
5. Pull the sleeve off arm.
6. Use ____ (involved) hand to pull sleeve off ____ (lead) arm.
7. Shake sleeve off.

To put the same shirt back on:

1. Lay shirt flat, front side down, on lap or table.
2. Open or lift the back bottom of the shirt with ____ (lead) hand.
3. Close fingers into a fist.
4. Push ____ (involved) arm into the sleeve; other arm can help.
5. Use ____ (lead) hand to push the sleeve up to the wrist of ____ (involved) arm or push it to your wrist.
6. Use ____ (lead) hand and push the sleeve up to elbow on ____ (involved) arm or push it up to elbow.
7. Push it past elbow.
8. Push ____ (lead) hand into the sleeve.
9. Use ____ (involved) hand to push the sleeve up to the wrist of ____ (lead) arm or shake the sleeve up the ____ (lead) arm.
10. Push it up to elbow.
11. Push it past elbow.
12. Have your ____ (lead) hand firmly grasp the back (or bottom) hem of the shirt.
13. Pull the shirt over head.
14. Shrug shoulders.
15. Pull down all around.

When teaching a child, act out each step. For example, as you say, "Push your left arm into the sleeve," show the child how to find the sleeve opening, how to push the weak arm through the opening, and how to get the hand out of the sleeve.

It may be helpful to seek assistance in breaking down dressing skills.

*When giving directions, substitute the appropriate hand (left or right) for either the lead (least affected) or involved (most affected) hand.

Since dressing is further complicated by the wide variety of clothing that is worn, do not introduce a more complex garment until the child is able to handle the simplest one without guidance or verbal instruction.

Training in dressing skills may take hours of careful thinking, planning, and supervised practice in which the child should be guided to perform one step at a time. Remember to encourage but not to interfere or take over. A skill you can do in five minutes may take the child much longer — sometimes even weeks. Reinforce these attempts with praise so the child will want to continue to try.

There will be times when you may need to be firm in expecting the child to perform independently. Sometimes a child is capable of doing some tasks but likes the comfort and security of being waited on. Perhaps the child has found that if he or she procrastinates long enough and creates a fuss, someone will take over the task. It is natural for some to accept help if offered.

Be sure you understand the child's capabilities or potential so that you do not make unfair demands. A child who may appear to be stubborn, slow, or awkward may actually lack the motor skills necessary to complete a task. In consultation with the doctor, therapist, and any other professional providing care, study carefully the child's abilities and consistently expect the child to utilize them fully. Guide when necessary, help to start an arm or leg into a sleeve or pants leg, but let the child continue alone. Provide the type of clothing that makes dressing not only as easy as possible, but also a good and happy experience.

Helpful Guides to Use In Teaching Dressing Skills

The following are suggested as aids to parents in teaching dressing skills. They are based on the personal experiences of therapists, clothing specialists, and parents of children who have disabilities.

- Begin by teaching undressing skills. Guiding a child through the steps involved promotes understanding. Use the same verbal instructions each time so the child can relate the words to a specific action.
- Be alert to a child's readiness to dress independently. If a child attempts to put an arm out toward a sleeve, help make the experience a successful try.
- When a child has learned to undress, that child is ready to learn dressing techniques. Teach fasteners after the child is able to put on and take off.
- Start out by standing behind the child and helping with each step by putting the child's hands, arms, and feet through each motion.
- Provide safe dressing conditions. If a child has a problem with balance, take precautions to prevent falling. Provide a sturdy chair with arms for sitting while dressing. Lock the brakes on wheelchairs. Let the child whose sitting balance is poor put on garments while lying in bed. Children often prefer to dress on the bed in order to use the headboard or pillows as props.

- Do not confuse a child by presenting too many different garments at one time. A child needs to practice one dressing technique over and over again. Coordination develops through repetition.
- Talk to the child gently as you work together. Make directions clear, concise, and, above all, consistent. Teach front from back, up from down, right from left. For example, "In goes the *right* arm," "now you can pull *up* the stockings," etc.
- Help a child by placing garments where they can be reached easily. Place them in the order in which they will be put on.
- Help if necessary, but do it as inconspicuously as possible so that the child may feel he or she has performed the task independently. As ability is gained withdraw the help so gradually that the child will be unaware it is gone.
- Let the child make some mistakes as one way of learning. Instead of correcting, encourage the child to figure out a solution.
- Do not dwell on what the child *cannot* do. Praise whatever *can* be accomplished, no matter how small.
- Mastery of motor control in dressing can lead to mastery of other skills.

Suggestions for Easier Dressing

The following suggestions are from persons who, having lived with disabilities, have learned to do for themselves:

UNDRESSING

- If a garment opens down the front, try slipping it off the shoulders after unfastening. Slip the sleeve off the noninvolved arm by pulling down on the cuff or edge with the other hand or the teeth. Swing garment across back and pull sleeve off involved arm.
- If it is difficult to unbutton shirts or blouses, grasp the garment at the back of the neck and pull off over the head. Pull, shake, or work the garment off the noninvolved arm first.
- To remove over-the-head garments, hook thumb of noninvolved hand over the inside of the opposite armhole and work involved arm out. Repeat on the other side. Grasp garment at back of neck and pull over the head.
- To take off pants while in a sitting position, lift one side of the body with one hand or elbow and push the garment over the buttocks with the other hand. Repeat on other side. Pull pants off by the cuffs, one leg crossed over the other, or kick the garment off.
- To take off pants while lying down, arch the back and work the pants down over the knees. Lift the knees with the hand, and the pants will slip off the legs.
- To remove shoes, loosen fastenings then hook back of shoe against chair rung or foot stool and pull against it. Push one shoe off with toe of other shoe.
- To remove socks, simply pull inside out.

DRESSING

- To put on garments opening down the front, place involved arm in sleeve, pull up over the shoulder, swing garment across other shoulder, and place noninvolved arm in sleeve, pushing outward and up.
- To put garments on over the head, place the garment flat on lap or table. Put arms in sleeves, lean forward, raise arms, and flip the garment over the head. Shrug or pull the garment into place.
- To pull pants up over hips while sitting in a wheelchair, lean on one chair arm. Insert other hand into the garment and push away from the body on opposite side. Slide garment into place. Repeat for other side.
- To pull on pants while lying flat in bed, bend knees close to the body to insert legs into the garment. Pull up past knees. Complete pulling up by arching back or rolling from side to side. Add suspenders for ease in pulling pants in place.
- To put on a coat or jacket, lay the garment over the back of the chair or place on shoulders. Slip arms into armholes, involved arm first. Shrug into place.

IN GENERAL . . .

- If it is difficult to pull or tug a coat or shirt into position, shrugging will often help.
- If arms are weak, rest the elbows on a table, chest of drawers, or chair arm when fastening buttons at the top of garments or when pulling on over the head.
- Place involved leg or arm in sleeve or pants leg first. Take out last.
- Wrap a handkerchief or scarf over prosthesis before inserting it into sleeve.
- Place mitten over an involved hand before slipping arm into sleeve or make a fist when putting hand through the sleeve.
- Distinguish back of garment from the front by marking the back with a colored patch, colored thread, or special label (an animal or cartoon figure can add a touch of humor).
- Sew on both sides of socks or shoes, tabs or loops of tape.
- Shoes can be put on more easily if the knees are bent.
- To put on socks with ease, fold upper half of sock over foot portion. Pull onto foot, grasp cuff of sock, and pull up.
- Fasten bras with back closure in front at waist level, turn the closure to the back, and slip the straps up the arms and over the shoulders.
- Buy gloves or mittens with leather palms for children who use crutches or wheelchairs.
- Pull up mittens and gloves by inserting the hand as far as possible when the item is lying flat and "rub" it on. Push the between-fingers sections against a drawerpull or doorknob to get fingers further into gloves.

FASTENINGS

Manipulation of fastenings requires hand-eye coordination and finger dexterity, which is difficult to teach and requires patience and skill to learn. For this reason, it is usually the last part of the dressing process to be mastered by most.

The child's own clothes should ordinarily be used and a dressing and undressing routine followed in teaching skills. If more practice is needed, play in which the child dresses up in adult clothing can be encouraged. A boy may learn to lace his father's old shoe or a girl to fasten hooks, buttons, or zippers on her mother's old clothes. Sometimes a large doll can even be used.

Buttons

Buttoning, which requires considerable finger dexterity, can be made easier if the buttons are:

- Large. Buttons the size of a quarter or more are easier to grasp. Size can be reduced after manipulative skills improve.
- Flat or concave. This shape slips through buttonholes more easily.
- Sewed on so they stand up slightly from the surface of the garment.
- Located within easy reach and sight.

Unbuttoning involves the following steps:

1. Grasping the edge of garment with buttonholes.
2. Grasping fabric near button with other hand.
3. Pushing button into buttonhole.
4. Pulling button through buttonhole with other hand.

Buttoning involves:

1. Grasping the edge of garment with buttonholes.
2. Grasping the button with other hand.
3. Aligning button and buttonhole.
4. Pushing button into buttonhole and releasing hold on button.
5. Grasping button with other hand.
6. Pulling fabric over button with hand that released button until button is completely through buttonhole.

Zippers

Zippers provide a firm, sure fastening but are sometimes difficult for persons with limited use of hands to pull. For ease in grasping, add to the zipper tab a decorative pull available in notions departments or a jewelry piece such as a charm or ring. Fabric ties, ribbons, or leather strips can also be used.



A FABRIC PULL



A CHARM PULL



Velcro

Although Velcro requires a minimum amount of dexterity or force to open or close, it does have to be positioned correctly and may be difficult to use by those unable to control movements. A button, snap, or hook may help to hold the opening in line for closing.

Hooks

Hooks are very difficult to manipulate unless they are large and sturdy, such as those used on waistbands.



Gripper Snap Fasteners

Children with poor coordination often find gripper snap fasteners difficult to match up. If used at all, they should be about the size of a dime and should not fit too tightly.

Lacing and Tying of Shoestrings

Lacing and tying of shoestrings require a great deal of coordination and finger dexterity. Wherever possible, buy shoes that slip on. Teaching a child to lace shoes can be made easier if:

- The lace tips are lengthened by an additional metal tip or the tip is stiffened by inserting into glue or nail polish and allowed to dry.
- The eyelets are enlarged by a shoe repairman.
- The laces are not too "fat" to slide through the eyelets easily.
- The laces are slightly longer than usual.
- A lace of color contrasting to the shoe is used.

These additional suggestions on fasteners have come from persons who have lived with disabilities:

BUTTONS — Begin buttoning with the bottom button in order to see what you are doing. It is then easier to line up the other buttons.

Button cuffs and most of a shirt or blouse front before putting on and slip over the head and hands.

Add a stretch button to the top of a shirt — an extra button sewn to the other side of the shirt on a loop of elastic thread and hooked over the original button.

ZIPPERS — The zipper is easier to fasten if the bottom is held taut. Persons who have limited hand use can use the involved arm or elbow to hold the bottom of the garment while the zipper is pulled closed.

To pull up a side zipper with one hand, hold the bottom of the zipper by leaning against a table or wall.

Trousers and skirts that have fly fronts can be fastened more easily with one hand if the person lies flat on the back.

READINGS AND RESOURCES

Books

Inquire for Prices

Aids for the Severely Handicapped, edited by Keith Copeland. 1974. Grune & Stratton, 111 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10003.

Aids to Independent Living: Self-Help for the Handicapped, by Edward W. Lowman and Judith Lannefeld Klinger. 1969. Blakiston Division, McGraw-Hill Book Co., 330 W. 42nd St., New York, NY 10036.

Independent Living for the Handicapped and the Elderly, by Elizabeth Eckhardt May, Neva R. Waggoner, and Eleanor Boettke Hotte. 1974. Houghton Mifflin Co., 110 Tremont St., Boston, MA 02107. (Details principles for work simplification, considers clothing selection and adaptations, and illustrates devices for independence in the home.)

Clothing Designs for the Handicapped, by Anne Kernalleguen. 1978. The University of Alberta Press, 450 Athabasca Hall, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T6G 2E8. (Easy-to-follow directions for altering ready-to-wear clothing and patterns to allow for special needs of men, women, and children.)

Booklets and Pamphlets

Inquire for Prices

Adapt Your Own: A Clothing Brochure for People with Special Needs, by Mary Catherine Beasley, Dorothy Burns, and Janis Weiss. 1977. University of Alabama, Division of Continuing Education in Home Economics, P.O. Box 2967, University, AL 35486.

Aids for Children: Technical Aids for Physically Handicapped Children, by International Society for Rehabilitation of the Disabled. International Information Centre on Technical Aids, Fack, S-161 03, Bromma 3, Sweden.

Clothes Sense for Handicapped Adults of All Ages, by P. Macartney. MAOT. 1973. Disabled Living Foundation, 346 Kensington High St., London W14, England.

Clothing for the Handicapped: Fashion Adaptations for Adults and Children, by Miriam T. Bowar. 1977. Sister Kenny Institute, Chicago Avenue at 27th St., Minneapolis, MN 55407.

Convenience Clothing and Closures. 1975. Talon/Velcro Consumer Education, 41 E. 51st St., New York, NY 10022.

Equipment for the Disabled: Clothing and Dressing for Adults, compiled by E.R. Wilshire. 4th ed. 1976. Equipment for the Disabled, 2 Foredown Dr., Portslade, Sussex, BN4, 2BB, England.

Using Everything You've Got, by Harold H. Wilke. 1977. National Easter Seal Society for Crippled Children and Adults, 2023 W. Ogden Ave., Chicago, IL 60612. (Pubn. E-58)

Articles

Inquire for Prices

Clothing: An Asset or a Liability? by Ellen Hanselmann Ahrbeck and Shirley E. Friend. 1976. Reprinted from the October, 1976, issue of *Rehabilitation Literature*. National Easter Seal Society for Crippled Children and Adults, 2023 W. Ogden Ave., Chicago, IL 60612. (Reprint A-253)

Clothing for the Handicapped and Disabled, by Naomi Reich. 1976. Reprinted from the October, 1976, issue of *Rehabilitation Literature*. National Easter Seal Society for Crippled Children and Adults, 2023 W. Ogden Ave., Chicago, IL 60612. (Reprint A-254)

Commercial Catalogs and Customized Clothing

Same jobbers and distributors of equipment used by persons who have disabilities, or in their rehabilitation, are listed below. Inquire direct for catalogs. Addresses of other supply houses and specialty companies will be found in the book *Aids to Independent Living: Self-Help for the Handicapped* (see page 62).

AAMED, Inc., 1215 S. Harlem Ave., Forest Park, IL 60130.

Cleo Living Aids, 3957 Mayfield Rd., Cleveland, OH 44121.

Everest & Jennings, Inc., 1803 Pontius Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90025.

Fred Sammons, Inc., Box 32, Brookfield, IL 60513.

Functional Fashions by Levi's, Levi's E P P., 6621 Geyer Springs Rd., Little Rock, AR 72209, Attention Department 8888.

Handee for You, Fashions for the Handicapped, C.O. Smith, 7674 Park Ave., Lowville, NY 13367.

J.A. Preston Corp., 71 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10003.

Lummex, Inc., 100 Spence St., Bay Shore, NY 11706.

PTL Design, Inc., Box 364, Stillwater, OK 74074. (Apparel manufacturer for the elderly and physically handicapped.)

Rehabilitation Equipment, Inc., 1556 Third Ave., New York, NY 10028.

Rehabilitation Products, American Hospital Supply Corp., 2020 Ridge Ave., Evanston, IL 60201.

Scully Walton, 505 E. 116th St., New York, NY 10029.

Shalik's Rehab Aids, P.O. Box 188, Archer, FL 32618.

Trujillo Industries, 5726 W. Washington Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90016.

Vabco Products, 160 Gilbert St., Fullerton, CA 92633.

Vocational Guidance and Rehabilitation Services, 2239 E. 55th St., Cleveland, OH 44103.

Your Wheelchair Fashions by Wheelchair Fashions, Inc., P.O. Box 99, South Windham, ME 04082.

Periodicals Published by Persons Who Have Disabilities

Magazines published by, or for, persons who have disabilities are a frequent source of information on improvised or commercial equipment and aids that individuals have found suitable for their needs. Several of these are listed below. Inquire for subscription rates.

Accent on Living, P.O. Box 726, Bloomington, IL 61701.

Achievement, The Achievement Disabled Action Group, Inc., 925 N.E. 122nd St., North Miami, FL 33161.

The Independent, Center for Independent Living, Inc., 2539 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley, CA 94704.

Green Pages, 641 W. Fairbanks, Winter Park, FL 32789.

Paraplegia Life, National Paraplegia Foundation, 369 Elliot St., Newton Upper Falls, MA 02164.

Parplegia News, Paralyzed Veterans of America, 935 Coastline Dr., Seal Beach, CA 90740.

Rehabilitation Gazette, 4502 Maryland Ave., St. Louis, MO 63108.

Other Sources

Accent on Information - AOI, computerized retrieval system for information on helpful devices, commercial equipment, or solving how-to-do-it problems, operated by Accent on Living, P.O. Box 726, Bloomington, IL 61701.

Aids and Appliances, catalog from the American Foundation for the Blind, 15 W. 16th St., New York, NY 10011.

Clothing to Fit Your Needs, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50010.

Disabled Living Foundation, material on clothing, adapted equipment, and special devices, 346 Kensington High St., London W14, England.

On Your Own, newsletter, University of Alabama, Division of Continuing Education in Home Economics, P.O. Box 2967, University, AL 35486.

Sources of Information on Self-Help Devices for Persons with Disabilities, selected references compiled by the Information Center, National Easter Seal Society for Crippled Children and Adults, 2023 W. Ogden Ave., Chicago, IL 60612. (Pubn. L-6)